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WHAT WOMEN WANT

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WHAT WOMEN WANT

What Women Want

An Interpretation of
The Feminist Movement

By

Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale

New York
Frederick A. Stokes Company
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TO

SANCHIA

ROSEMARY AND CLEMENCY

DAUGHTERS OF THE NEW AGE

PREFACE

SINCE I was a child and my mother first taught me to love women, I have pondered over their needs, capacities and aspirations. As I grew older I added to my musings some study and observation. The results of all these are here set down in a little book which I have ventured to call "What Women Want," using the word not only in the sense of desire, but in its original meaning, which signifies need. It might perhaps be said that the whole of human progress is summed up in the transmutation of passive needs into active desires, and of these into attainment. Therefore, while I admit that many women do not now desire the things with which this book deals, I believe they need them equally with those who have reached the second stage of progress, and who are sufficiently conscious of what they lack to wish to possess it.

It is my conviction that the evolutionary growth known as the Feminist Movement is gradually supplying to women the things they most need, and it is therefore with Feminism that this book deals.

Much that is here set down will be familiar to those who are workers in the woman's movement. I have tried not so much to uncover new ground as to

develop the old. And though I confess myself wholly partisan, my object has been rather explanation than propaganda. For of all the hopes and questionings, reconstructions and revolts of our age of changing ideals, there is no cause upon the merits of which the general public is more readily led astray than this of women. Even the name Feminism, by which for lack of a better term we call it, is somewhat misleading, the French form lacking robustness to ears attuned to English; while the ultimate goal of the movement is usually quite obscured to the public by the controversies provoked by each phase of its progress.

I have tried to keep this final goal in view throughout these pages. I have tried to indicate a focus from which one may visualize the general causes, trend and value of the movement, and estimate its probable future course. The opinions here expressed are those which I have found to be held by the majority of feminists, and in no case have I discussed the views of a minority without pointing out the respects in which they differ from the main body. Lest I should seem presumptuous in thus claiming to speak for others besides myself, I should like—a word of autobiography being permissible in a preface—to explain the reasons which led me to the writing of this book.

The views of a large body are never so dramatic as those of small groups of extremists. On the other hand, liberal-minded people lack the alarmist quality of the ultra-conservative, whose continual cry of "Wolf,

wolf!" makes the timid tremble at the approach of each and every progressive reform. So that though much is written by pioneers and by reactionaries, we hear less from the great body of women who are too busy working in some branch or other of progressive activity to have time to record their views on the feminist movement as a whole. In the midst of an enormous output of printed opinion, I have therefore thought that there might still be room for the views of a woman who represents, in parliamentary language, the centre rather than the right or left in this controversy. Though I lay no claim to the mantle of the prophet, I may perhaps be privileged to speak from a somewhat wider experience than has fallen to the lot of most of our contestants. At least my hope is that a helpful angle of vision may be gained from the observation of one who, in addition to working extensively in the woman's movement of England and America, has followed the routine of two exacting professions, and enjoyed the intimate enclosed life of marriage and maternity. This opportunity for varied observation and experience of the modern woman's life is my excuse for venturing to voice her cause; my hope is that the excuse may prove also a justification.

To my husband, friend, and fellow-feminist, I am grateful for the encouragement that spurred me to attempt this book, and the criticism which helped me to complete it.

November, 1914. B. F-R. H.

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PART I

THE AWAKENING OF WOMEN

CHAPTER I

THE MOTHER OF FEMINISM

FEMINISM is that part of the progress of democratic freedom which applies to women. It is a century-old struggle conducted by large groups of people in different parts of the world to bring about the removal of all artificial barriers to the physical, mental, moral and economic development of the female half of the race. The movement is most advanced where democracy is best established, and most backward where autocracy is strongest. It is advocated by women of every class who have an instinct for sex-loyalty and a democratic vision, or whose training has supplied a greater breadth of mind than was innate in them.

But though the disciples of Feminism are now drawn from every class, it was inevitable that the movement should owe its inception and early progress to the efforts of women of the educated class living above the poverty line. That line is used by statisticians to divide those who possess the necessities of life from those who do not. Our definition of necessities varies with the ages, but for the present purpose I may fairly define them as those material

things, shelter, food, clothes and sleep, which make life possible, together with enough leisure and opportunity for happiness to make it desirable.

Throughout the history of the world the majority of people have lived, according to this definition, below the poverty line, and they still do. The majority can enjoy a certain degree of animal happiness, induced by the satisfaction of the simple animal appetites for food, warmth, sleep, and reproduction. Human happiness, induced by self-expression, creation, adventure and the highest forms of love, has been, and still is, in large measure beyond its reach.

This is the tragedy of civilization. Much less than half humanity has come into its kingdom. The untold millions of the larger part stand at the gates and barely see the promised land. In many, even desire for the vision is blunted by monotony and want, and the marvellous human brain is deadened to the thoughtless level of the beasts.

This fact is the cause of all revolutions, all uprisings, all colonizing schemes and social reforms, and almost all discontent. I say almost, because there is a discontent caused by surfeit, and felt only by the few; there is also the "divine discontent" of the creative faculty—another matter altogether.

The Great Discontent—that of humanity's dispossessed—has been felt by the mass of both sexes in every age, but it has been inarticulate. The majority

cannot express itself; it is too poor in training, thought and speech: but the minority can; it has education, knowledge, organization. So throughout history the few have spoken for the many, have pointed them to the promised land, and have suffered when the blurred eyes of the many could not see the vision, nor their tired brains understand it.

Of all the dispossessed, women have been the poorest through the ages. Of the deadened brains, theirs have been most blunted, of the tired hearts, theirs most wearied. Inexorable nature has laid upon the female the burden of the race's life; inexorable man—the God-head in the beast, he to whom every sentient thing is but the engine of his divine desire—has been content that she should willingly take upon herself the burden of the race's service. So she has toiled through the centuries, and the bloom of her joyous youth has withered before that youth was passed. He has been weary, she more so; he has worked bitterly and long, she more bitterly and longer; he has been ignorant, she more ignorant. Pain he has suffered, and she greater pain. Love has died in his heart, killed by toil and monotony, but she has watched it die, and watched the child of his love sicken and die in her arms. He has suffered, but so deeply has she suffered that sometimes she has forgotten how to suffer more, and has become a drudge, feeling as an animal, without thought—a poor half-

sentient instrument for man's purposes and nature's. This is the story of the women of the poor, now and in the past, and those who doubt it have not read their history or psychology aright.

Therefore, I repeat, the woman's movement is the child of the few, a product of that minority which has had the leisure and training that make thought and aspiration possible. In all that follows of the awakening of women I refer only to those who through the advantages of environment have developed as human women, who have risen above mere blind functioning.

This would be true were I writing of a man's movement—the majority would still have to be counted out. But here is the difference. The untouched majority would be smaller among men than among women, because more men have eaten, drunk, slept, played and thought enough for happiness than have women. Causes have sprung up among large bodies of men throughout history; they have hardly ever, until our own times, originated with women. Just as fewer ideas have been born of men below the poverty line than above it, so fewer still have been born among women, the class whose poverty line lies below man's.

Women have often been taunted with lack of the creative and reasoning faculties. But until the present age the number of women possessing opportunities to develop these has been so small in proportion

to men as to make any comparison invidious. Only now are the faculties, ambitions, desires and capacities of women emerging from obscurity. Through all time women as a class have been silent; now a proportion becomes articulate. During the years of their silence Man the Romancer has spoken for them, clothing them with the garments of his own fantasy. So well has his fancy wrought that sometimes women have even believed it fact, though more often their acquiescence has been superficial. To-day fact, not fancy, is baring itself in the daylight so rapidly and in such varied shapes as to cause the Teller of Tales much confusion. As each new shape appears another of his conceits vanishes, and he cries out, "Behold, she whom I knew is no longer woman—she has unsexed herself!" He forgets that he never knew her, because her spirit was dumb. He forgets, too, that his fantasy clothed but one creature—"Woman"—a chimera of his own brain, and that what he is at last witnessing is the rise of *women*, individually and collectively, an infinite variety of conscious persons bound together by the single need of self-development. When as many women as men are free to express themselves, there will remain but one great struggle on earth, the struggle of all the dispossessed, men and women alike, for their inheritance. The day of women is at hand; the day of the dispossessed is approaching. When that final cause is won, the

race will have entered the promised land, and can begin the spiritual development for which all its æons of material and mental growth are but the preparation. But the human family must cross the threshold together; half the race, the mother half, must not drag behind in the triumphant march. Therefore the completion of the woman's movement is the next step forward for us all. Therefore, too, its beginning in the eighteenth century was hardly second in value to man's titanic conception, democracy itself.

Democracy is the mother of Feminism, as it is of all the most beautiful aspirations of our day. It is the hope of the world, the means by which we are retrieving that understanding of Christ's teachings from which ecclesiasticism and our own appetites have led us so far astray. The church, founded on equality and brotherly love, lacked spiritual strength to withstand the temptations of temporal power. The comradeship of the apostles gave place to the hierarchy of priests, equality fell before authority, simplicity became pomp, spontaneity was lost in ritual. In the Christian ideal, man stands naked before his maker; but the church has drawn so many veils between them that man is left alone, wrapped in obscurity. As authority divided man from God, how much more did it divide man from man, and woman from man!

If there is one truth more profound than another, it is that men cannot achieve happiness at the expense of their brothers. All must go forward in the path together, or the shadows before the feet of one will

invade the sunlight in which the other walks. Yet throughout history Authority has set at defiance this law, and has hustled its uncounted brothers into the shade in order that the sunlight might be broader in its own path. It has ruled as king, noble, priest, employer, or husband, and its law has been, not fraternity, but depredation. True, Authority has sometimes been altruistic, but its efforts for the common good have been inevitably vain because, instead of by knowledge, it has been guided merely by opinion. Every human soul on earth is lonely; no task is so difficult as that of thoroughly comprehending even one of our fellow-men; yet Authority arbitrarily decides the course of others not only individually but collectively, a far harder problem. Moreover, it does this without true sympathy, however virtuous its aims. Under Authority there is no equality, and without equality sympathy becomes either a condescension or an impertinence. Man, stripped of communion with his God and with his fellow, has groped his way sunward amid bitterness and fratricidal hate, and even earth's fortunate have been retarded in development because their authority made them ignorant, bigoted, and antipathetic. Class against class, church against church, each striving to gain domination at the expense of the other, has in turn claimed divine sanction for usurpation of divine functions.

All this error, the conception that responsibility can be exerted by the few for the many, the failure to

grasp the difference between the necessity of leadership and the calamity of autocracy, received its first serious check in the burgeoning of democracy under the French Revolution. True, man had already commenced to sweep the veils of priest-craft from his eyes, had partly regained his direct communion with the spirit through the Reformation; but it was left for the Revolution to shatter in one prodigious cataclysm the idea of king, noble, priest and class, flying on the ruins of authority its staggering banner of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," which has been called the greatest dare God ever gave His people.

To the French, who with the Italians have perhaps stood first in genius among the races of the world, we owe the ideal of democracy. Though this has often been claimed for the ancient Greeks, the exquisite and brief flower of Greek thought did not grow beyond the concept of a democratic plutocracy founded on slavery. Moreover, in the Golden Age the jealous Greeks were not able to live up to the ideal of brotherly conduct implied in democracy. At the highest moment of their civilization they plunged their country into the barbarity of civil war, ultimately losing in the struggle even their slender hold on the real essence of democracy. Unhappily this was almost true of their modern followers, the French, who offered up a Roland to the scaffold, strangled the glorious child of their aspiration in the moment of its birth, and set upon its grave the headstone of an absolute despotism. The theory remained; the discarded

practice was caught up across the sea, and America endeavoured to apply fraternity. In a few poor decades she too failed before the Frankenstein's monster of plutocracy; but she cherishes the dream, and it is to her we look for the coming-of-age of the first real democracy of the world.

All of which is a necessary background for Feminism. We have seen the impossibility of comradely understanding between master and servant, between the possessing and possessed. We have seen the futility of the sun-farers essaying their glad march impeded by the shadow-dwellers. What must we think of humanity's chances when to class-ignorance is added sex-ignorance? When men, unable to think even for their fellow men, undertake to think for all women? When the fortunate, unable to comprehend the needs of the dispossessed, seek to define the activities of that least fortunate group of all, the women of the poor?

Democracy in its gigantic birth destroyed, in idea at least, all dominations save one. Kingly, noble, and priestly authority fell, but sex authority remained, the last kingdom, the one unconquered fortress of privilege. Even Rousseau himself, champion of the rights of man, inspirer of the Revolution, was utterly unable to conceive woman as a partner in those rights, and relegated her to the status of a sub-species, created to serve and please her master. So that the whole feminist movement of the last century and a half, the whole painful rise of woman from a state of

serfdom to the considerable degree of freedom that is hers in many countries to-day, has been nothing more than her contribution to the democratization of humanity. Though doubly handicapped by man's denial of her powers and her own ignorance of them, she, true to her partnership in the human race, has not failed in her share of the labour. To-day, though partly crippled by her past, she is standing by man's side, her face toward the rising sun.

I have used the word "woman" here because I think those who have toiled on this path are true leaders of their sex, marching but a pace, not a furlong, before their sisters—that they are true to type, not variants. But it must be remembered again that until humanity comes into its own the many must be mute, and that until all women enjoy the opportunities for expression possessed now by a few we cannot know the capacity of "woman," only of some women. We do not know the richness of the earth until all her treasures are laid bare—we do not even know whether that portion which is now uncovered is as rich as the larger part which is still hid.

Therefore it is impossible to judge of the ultimate value of Feminism from its manifestations hitherto. One must consider democracy as a whole, male and female, gauge its benefits during the last century, and taking these as a focus, visualize their indefinite extension into the future.

CHAPTER II

THE YEARS BEHIND HER

To-day we see hundreds of thousands of women in many parts of the world owning their own property, their own wages, sharing with their husbands the custody of their children, civilly responsible for their own misdeeds (a strange thought that, in the old common law days)—entering into extra-domestic occupations, travelling, studying, following the arts and the professions, voting and legislating. All these advantages we owe to democracy and Feminism,—for while before democracy a few women could do all these things, the majority could do none, and while in unfeminized democracies all women can do some of these things, no woman can do all. Even where Feminism is triumphant doors are still closed to many women, but this is because democracy is not yet full-fledged either for men or women, and the open doors are practically as numerous for one sex as for the other, each having arrived at the same stage of liberty.

Linking these two great forces together, we are able to understand why no feminist movement in

history could have been permanently successful until our own day. There is nothing new under the stars. Things evolve; they are not created. Therefore our own woman's movement has its prototypes in history, yes, and in mythology, while some modern scientists tell us of a matriarchate that lay behind the patriarchal system, giving to women the first place in ownership and government. This state, however, antedates recorded history, and our glimpses of it are mostly guess-work. The reasons deduced by scientists for its growth and decline are fascinating, but they are outside the scope of this brief study. Suffice it that since the dawn of the historic epoch, with certain notable exceptions, women have been entirely under the domination of men.

In ancient Egypt so much of the matriarchal idea existed that we find women singularly free, owning their own property, engaging in commerce in their own right, holding office, and enjoying the privilege of divorce at will. I know no parallel to this last-named freedom among modern civilized peoples with the exception of the Burmese, whose women enjoy a liberty greater in some respects than that of any women in the world to-day. Incidentally, liberty has not fulfilled the programme of the pessimists, and degenerated into license, for the Burmese divorce rate compares very favourably with that of Christian peoples. It is instructive that the village life of both

ancient Egypt and modern Burma is distinctly democratic, though the national government of each is an autocracy.

The freedom of its women cannot be said to have weakened the Egyptian race, whose national power endured for thousands of years, as against the brief hundreds of the Greeks, with their all-dominant male state. There was no feminist movement among the Egyptians. It was not needed. Greek women on the contrary needed it bitterly, but except for the mythical Amazons, admired while destroyed by the Hellenic heroes, and certain very modern feminist passages in Plato and Euripides, the Greek women seem to have been without champions of either sex. Their position has an interesting parallel in the modern Japanese. In both we find a class openly and even honourably specialized for pleasure and mental stimulation, while the mute and companionless wives are strictly set aside for house-service and child-bearing. The Greek women might have developed to the point of revolt had their social institutions remained steadfast for a longer period, instead of disintegrating into fratricide and despotism. But at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war they were still uneducated, and if democracy is the mother of Feminism the alphabet is her father. One wonders if the women of the Greeks, had they been awakened, could have stayed that over-masculinization and consequent disruption

which withered the most perfect bloom of ancient civilizations. It is tempting, but idle, to speculate. We shall never know to what steadfast heights the Hellenes might have risen had their women been free. We can look to the Japanese, however, with hope that the parallel referred to will not continue. With modern ideas of democracy and education seeping through the country, Nippon's women are already beginning to show signs of the stirring of a new birth.

As with the Greek women, so with the Roman we find few traces of a conscious Feminism. The Patrician woman of Rome did indeed possess many advantages unknown to the Athenian, but she was class-ridden, and incapable of cooperation with her sex as a whole. She was educated, handled her own money to a great extent, and enjoyed an equable divorce law, but behind her was neither the gentleness of Christianity nor of Buddhism, neither democracy nor any matriarchal concept, nothing that would give her that spiritual, humanitarian and democratic vision which is the very soul of the woman's movement. Isolated by her class, if she did organize, as in the descent of Hortensia and her friends upon the Forum, it was for her own kind alone. Bemused by luxury, if she had aspirations they were for greater luxury. Deprived of the joy of work, if she laboured it was but at intrigue. Individuality she had, and lived brilliantly, for herself alone, but of the solidarity

of sex she knew nothing. Her sisters, the women of the Plebs, were to her then, as to us in retrospect, unknown. True to her type as aristocrat, she followed the sunlit path unconcerned as to the clouds that might break after her, so that her own feet went dry-shod. Feminism is not for such as she, for it is pitiful.

And after her the Christian ages came, with the lady, the "loaf-giver," triply bound by man's law, by what he interpreted to her as God's, and by her own ignorance. The fair strong women of the Teutonic races who mothered modern Europe wrought well within their narrow limits, but their day was not yet. Both authority and education were with the Church, and the Church prescribed to a hair's breadth the activities of her daughters. Civilization was too rough to permit of ready communication or of safety for women abroad; education was minimized, democracy unknown, authority enjoyed its apotheosis.

Yet the lady of the castle could boast two things, work and responsibility. The first was always hers, for a feudal castle manufactured all that it needed within its walls. The second she assumed as châtelaine, whenever her lord's wars carried him abroad. As there are no greater stimulants to growth than responsibility and work, she grew strong and resourceful, and even learned in many arts. But she remained under coverture, a minor in the eyes of the law, isolated and guarded. Under feudalism

individual women lived greatly, but the mass were bound and mute.

The Renaissance was the first Age of Women. Educated, powerful, and fearless, the great ladies of Western Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries give us examples of mental and physical strength unattained in the previous history of their sex. Statesmen, diplomatists, great saints and great lovers, scholars, queens, philanthropists and teachers, they pass across the multicoloured canvas of that brilliant age. From Elizabeth of England, queen and statesman, to Dorothea Bucca, doctor of Bologna; from Margaret of Navarre, novelist and patron, to Beatrice d'Este, scholar and ambassador; we find in them life, abundant, colourful, and untiring. All forms of expression were theirs, even the male's dominant note of combat. There were soldiers among these women, though the greatest of all fighters, Joan of Arc, must not be counted with them. She stands alone in history, mystical, almost sexless, of the soil, simplicity's self. She belongs to France, democracy, and God, and to her name five centuries of mankind have bared the head.

To understand the splendour of the women of the Renaissance, however, it is not necessary to be a student of history. One has but to turn to Shakespeare to know these women in the flesh. Beatrice, Portia, Rosalind, Isabel, Viola, Constance, brave and witty,

executive and adventurous, saintly and ardent, agonized and enduring, they give us the perfume of that glowing time as no historian can hope to do. So successful are they, so enterprising, that it has been said that in the twentieth century Shakespeare would undoubtedly have been a suffragist—and perhaps a militant!

The first axiom of Feminism, that the majority of human attributes are not sexual, was illustrated by these women of the Renaissance. Where women were permitted learning they became learned, where power was theirs they used it, where courage was demanded they were courageous. Most especially were they executive, with a thoroughness worthy of a modern business man. They demonstrated the tenets of Feminism but, lacking democracy, had neither the will nor the power to extend them to embrace their sex in general.

In all the foregoing we must not forget that opportunity for development came to woman not as a conscious gift from man but as a crust fallen from the table of his own repast. Through all the historic epoch until the present day woman's activities have followed man's. Let him concentrate on aggressive warfare, she sharpens his arms, and becomes proficient in defence; let him be lured by the mysticism of the early church, she follows him, and in her vow of celibacy renounces more than he, by as much as

maternity is a greater passion than paternity. If he casts aside the mysteries in favour of the humanities she, with him, pores over the manuscripts of the ancient world. Whatever the spirit of the age, it animates both sexes, but to a greater or less extent, according to the degree of its dominant male principle. If we accept as a working hypothesis that male energy is dynamic and female static, we find the woman's part less among migratory hunting tribes than among town-dwelling and agricultural peoples, less in imaginative art than in serviceable industry, less in war than in peace, and greater in defence than in attack. Always she shares with man, but from the disappearance of the hypothetical matriarchate until the present day, the male note has dominated in the major key, the female undertones accompanying as best they could. The two have never harmonized equally, and the female has never led. To-day we dream that we see the dawn of a fusion between them in which the highest qualities of both may be developed to the fullest, and the strong points of one may discount the weaknesses of the other.

This by way of preface to what followed on the Renaissance—the enormous set-back given to the women of Western Europe by the Puritan Reformation. However great the ultimate value of the Reformation to man in removing the intermediaries between him and his God, its imme-

diate effect on the temporal status of women was disastrous.

The Roman church followed St. Peter rather than St. Paul, the second of whom was of all the apostles least sympathetic to women. Its Maryolatry introduced the female principle almost into the God-head itself, and the insistence on grace by good works opened up a field of spiritual activity particularly woman's own. Nuns, no less than monks, had honour; abbesses as well as abbots contributed to the glory of the church. To all this the Renaissance had added the study of the classics, wherein beauty is divine and the Gods themselves are not too remote for mortal love.

But in the Reformation Paul was set up against Peter, the Old Testament almost usurped the place of the New, the Classics were instruments of the devil, the Roman Church became the Scarlet Woman, melancholy ousted joy as a sign of grace—and the patriarchal system of the ancient Jews tramped in its Roundhead armour over what had been Merrie England. In the church merciful there is always place for women; in the church militant there is none. When joy and love are crowned, as in the Renaissance, when service is grace as in the Middle Ages, the spirit of woman expands,—but when the gentle Christ pales before Jehovah, God of Battles, the shadow falls over woman, the life-giver.

In England the right of gentlewomen to an education, which, during the Renaissance, had made scholars of princesses at fourteen, was eclipsed by Puritanism for nearly two hundred years, until the dawn of democracy and the rise of the early "blue stockings." The general position of women was never so low throughout the course of English history as it became in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The one advantage gleaned by them from Puritanism was an insistence on chastity for both sexes which had been lacking in the Renaissance.

In France the case was almost as bad. The State Church was Catholic, but much of the strong blood of the middle class was Huguenot. By the seventeenth century this material, which might have served to revivify church and state, was drawn into a persecuted class living apart from the life of the country. The nation became divided against itself. As in England, the virtuous, by abstaining from all forms of amusement, handed over these great agencies of expression to the vicious. In both countries corruption claimed the courts, the aristocracy, and to some extent the arts, while Puritanism looked on refusing to soil its hands with the vanities of life, thus insuring to the Devil an uncontested field of activity. Nowhere was this mistake more marked than during the years of the Protectorate in England, which closed

the theatres to a great national drama, only to see them opened at the Restoration to licentious imitations of a foreign art.

In all this atmosphere of militancy, with repression on the one hand, and its corollary debauchery on the other, the genius of women could not thrive. The courageous note of the Renaissance disappeared. Women were no longer strong and fearless in their acts, but furtive, weak, preferring the back-stairs to the open. There was a vital directness about the great women of the Renaissance that we do not find again until our own time. Even in the eighteenth century, the age of the salon, woman's influence, though preëminent, was indirect. She governed man without his knowledge; and if wise was careful to cloak her wisdom lest it outshine his.

The eighteenth century up to the French Revolution produced the most artificial society the world has ever seen. The great age of common sense was also the age of common vulgarity, common materialism, and common corruption. The virtues of Puritanism never reached the aristocracy, but its vice, which is hypocrisy, most assuredly did. Men and women hid their real natures from each other and from themselves. Women were referred to as polite females; they were the fair, the weaker vessel. They were called frail, false, fickle, variable and the rest, and they often became these things, because the artificial

spirit of the age, completely severed from reality, demanded such attributes from them. I do not for a moment wish to suggest that any of the evils of this age should be laid only to Puritanism, but I think it is obvious that the repression of the Reformation exaggerated the ills of the reaction. Be that as it may, the vision of woman that the early eighteenth century conjures for us is of an intriguing coquette, hiding undeniable abilities and ambitions beneath the ultra-feminized exterior of a doll. Better the frank looseness of the Renaissance than the coy viciousness, the back-stairs gallantry, the famous "indirect influence" of the aristocratic women under the late Louis and early Georges. Feminization, not Feminism, is their contribution to the passing types.

Through European history up to the mental stirrings which led to the Revolution in France, and which made possible at once democracy and Feminism, the women of the fortunate class always expressed the spirit of their age within the limitations imposed upon them by church and state. Now and then an isolated voice was lifted in protest. Mlle. de Gournay, Montaigne's adopted daughter, published in 1622 an essay on "The Equality of Men and Women," and four years later, her "Woman's Grievance" appeared. But such voices were only crying in the wilderness; there were no ears to hear. Without the rights of man, there can be no doctrine of a like

emancipation for women, though there may be individual opinions.

We find women in all ages dominated by the concepts of the men in authority, in which they shared with greater or less benefit to themselves according to the concept. We find them castle-bound in the middle ages, parlour-bound in the age of patch and powder. We find some women educated and a few born powerful, but nowhere do church, law, and custom give them freedom from sex subjection. Where individually they may win power, it is often at the cost of things more precious, a left-handed power gained at the expense of men, as with the famous mistresses of the French court. We find these aristocratic women swayed by men's demands on them, never really themselves, because not free to be so. Even in the Renaissance their activities are rather demonstrations of human ability than of the special powers which may be women's. They win or lose, each for herself. They serve their men as they must, their country as they may, their God as He is pictured to them. Their love is individual, their country is the tool of their class, their God speaks through a priest, or blares through the trumpet of an armed host.

They cannot speak for women because they know only their own kind of woman, nor for themselves, because they have been taught to see themselves through man's eyes. They are class-conscious and

sex-conscious, but not woman-conscious, and except for the ministrations of formal charity they know nothing of their million mute and toiling sisters. Feminism could not succeed before democracy, more than the child could be born without the mother. Woman could not be free under feudalism, under patriarchism, nor under priestcraft. All these creations of man had to be tested and discarded before he himself could begin to know freedom, and she could not follow the vision until his eyes were unbandaged. She is his, he hers; in this joint quest they must go forward together. The attempt to interpret their journey and predict its goal is the object of all that follows in this book.

CHAPTER III

HER BIRTH AND SOME OF HER FOSTER-PARENTS

In the eighteenth century the first wide-spread philosophy of Feminism came, logically enough, from men. Democracy being a male invention, the first suggestion of its application to women might be expected from its creators. The Encyclopædists, that brilliant group of thinkers whose writings formed the philosophic basis of the French Revolution, included at least two men who were able to see that the freedom they so passionately demanded for one sex should be extended to the other.

Their way had already been cleared for them by the philosopher, Helvétius. Though not a feminist, this writer had rendered great service to women by his theory that inequalities of intellect are not inherent, but induced by differences of education and experience. Those who accepted this doctrine could no longer so easily hold the favourite masculine view of women as intellectually a sub-species. But the first clear feminist note was sounded by Baron Holbach in his "Système Social," published in 1773. "In all the countries of the world," said he, "the lot of women is

to submit to tyranny." He enumerated their disabilities, from lack of education in the upper class, and of protection in the lower, to the miseries of a "marriage of convenience." He pleaded for a real respect for women instead of a show of deference masking contempt, and referred to Plato's opinion that they should share with men the responsibilities of government.

In 1792 Condorcet, one of the leading philosophic Revolutionists, while a member of the Assembly, drafted a bill for public education which should give to girls the same advantages as boys. He struck a vital note in insisting upon this not only for the sake of the girls themselves but because of their potential maternity. Mr. H. N. Brailsford, who, in his fascinating book "Shelley, Godwin and their Circle," devotes a chapter to Mary Wollstonecraft and Feminism, gives to Condorcet a place "at least as distinguished as John Stuart Mill's" in the gratitude of women. Writing to a friend in America, Condorcet said, "Is it not in his quality of sensible being, having moral ideas, that man has rights? Women then should have absolutely the same." In his "Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind" he pleaded for the destruction of prejudices "which have established between the two sexes an inequality of rights *fatal even to him whom it favours.*" This was of the essence of democracy, linking the cause of man with woman.

The enthusiasm with which women were entering into the humanitarianism of the new freedom must

have encouraged Holbach and Condorcet in their championship. When the latter was outlawed during the Terror, an asylum was found for him in the home of a total stranger, Madame Vernet. He urged her not to expose herself to the danger of sheltering a proscribed man, but she replied, "The Convention, Monsieur, has the right to put you outside the law; it has not the power to put you outside humanity. You will remain." Sophie de Grouchy, who became the wife of Condorcet, was among the first converts to his ideas, and in her salon were found the most advanced thinkers of the day, including the American-Englishman, Thomas Paine.

Madame Roland, she who paid her tribute to the guillotine with the famous apostrophe, "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" was an Encyclopædist and a Revolutionist of importance. Olympe de Gouges, who perished under the knife in the same year, 1793, was so broadly humanitarian that she even undertook—Revolutionist though she was—to defend Louis XVI before the Convention. His greatest crime, she declared, was in being born at a time when philosophy was silently preparing the foundations of a republic. She urged a fraternal union of all the republican groups and the abolition of rule by the guillotine.

These are the names of but a few women out of the many who stood godmothers at the birth of democracy. Nor were even woman suffragists lacking. As early as 1789 a group of women of Provence memo-

rialized the "States General" in favour of an equal franchise, and suggested that those women who had given citizens to the state should be eligible for election.

But the first woman who clearly linked democracy with Feminism was, of course, Mary Wollstonecraft. After a stay in revolutionary Paris, she returned to her native England and produced in 1792 her "Vindication of the Rights of Woman," which remains to this day the classic text-book of the woman's movement. It stands squarely upon the right to equality of opportunity, which is now, as ever, the basis of democracy. It begins that protest against the sexualization of human attributes which is being carried on to-day by the brilliant analyses of Charlotte Perkins Gilman and the prophetic visions of Olive Schreiner. In common with Holbach and indeed with all great feminists, Mary Wollstonecraft attacked the double standard of morality, and condemned the "live by pleasing" system, which makes parasites of a large class of women. Finally she set the note of conservation for the whole movement by insisting on the importance of reforms as they affect the race, through the production of a more responsible and enlightened maternity.

With Mary Wollstonecraft modern Feminism was born. It mattered little that after her death reaction settled over Europe and democracy slept for a generation. The giant was bound to rise again refreshed, and when he did women were inevitably to rise with

him. Despotism and militarism delayed the woman's movement in France until our own time. Under Napoleon, tyrant add anti-feminist, it was enough that Madame de Staël should raise her voice for individual rights for her to be exiled. Elsewhere the excesses of the Revolution produced a reaction to safe respectability which lasted until the early days of the Chartist movement and the Reform Law riots in England. The spirit of man was cowed by exhausting wars and his ideals fettered by commercialism. Lacking the great rallying cry of freedom, his imagination turned for stimulant to romance. The materialism and gallantry of the eighteenth century gave place to a false romanticism with its beginning in "Paul and Virginia" and its apotheosis in the novels of Sir Walter Scott. Women, so recently emancipated from the sophisticated "frailties" of the powder period by the realities and heroisms of the Revolution, having barely exchanged the label "females" for the title "women," found themselves in danger of a reversion to an equally artificial, if more flattering, status as "ministering angels," "guardian spirits" and the like. Philosophy suffered a relapse, and women, proclaimed by the Age of Reason to be humans, were classified either as divine beings or as devils. The early-Victorian novelist hardly knew any distinctions in the sex but these. The former were adorably virtuous, but insufferably dull, the latter insufferably wicked, but adorably interesting, as witness the classic example of Amelia and Becky Sharp.

In spite of all these drawbacks, however, woman, unknown to herself and to man, was biding her time, waiting till he should unfurl again the glorious banner he had raised, which was alike the symbol of his freedom and of hers. The voice of humanity freed, which had rung across the world from France and America in anguish and blood, and to which the souls of great women had stirred responsive, once having been heard could not be forgotten. After its birth in France, the woman's movement slept for a season, to wake again in the two countries where democracy was most actively developing—America and England.

The first Women's Rights Convention of the world was held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, and may be said to have marked the rise of the woman's movement of our own day. From that time onward the freeing and humanizing of women all the world over has kept pace with the democratization of the nations. But between the statement of feminist principles in the Revolution and their translation into a thousand forms of action to-day, has risen a great new force, as vital as democracy itself, and even more modifying in its effect upon the lives of women. The name of this force is Industrialism, and its rise synchronises with the adolescence of Feminism.

CHAPTER IV

HER ADOLESCENCE

DEMOCRACY, as we have seen, supplied the basic theory of liberty and equality from which Feminism grew. But an evolutionary movement must be founded on something more than theory. Man does not live by bread alone, it is true; but the bread has to be forthcoming, none the less, or with the body the mind itself will perish. The Encyclopædists provided the theory of the Revolution, but its dynamic force came from the bitter misery of the people, the actual material want of the peasantry of France. So with Feminism. Democracy gave the woman's movement its philosophic sanction, supplied the formulæ for its demands, but the stored energy which has carried it forward to conspicuous success has been generated in the hearts of women, not their heads, through suffering and need, not through doctrine.

As I pointed out in my first chapter, women as a class have always been humanity's greater sufferers, and they have suffered hopelessly, because ignorantly. The first demand democracy made for women was for an education. In America, after the War

of Independence, public school education relied almost entirely for its imaginative appeal on the story of that war. The three R's and patriotism formed the staple diet of the schools, and patriotism spelled democracy. Therefore, educated women, divorced for the first time in history from the bigotry of class, began in the nineteenth century to use their education for the benefit of their sex as a whole. They looked about them, and discovered in addition to the obvious legal and social wrongs of women enumerated by the first feminists, a subsequent and enormous change wrought by industrialism, which heaped upon the old disabilities new ones even more fraught with danger and suffering. The needs of women were multiplying and changing, and the basic demands of Mary Wollstonecraft could no more meet them than can the clauses of the United States Constitution, written over a century ago for a small agricultural people, meet the needs of the vast industrial America of to-day. It is necessary, then, to understand Feminism as an evolutionary development, not as a doctrine—as a growth, not as an edifice.

For a long time, however, so slowly does society slough its outworn skins of habit, the American pioneer women of the 'fifties and onward, and the English women who followed them, were obliged to concentrate on the more elementary demands—education, freedom to enter the professions, citizenship, and the

reform of that group of laws dealing with domestic relations: marriage, divorce, the age of consent, custody of the child, and ownership of property. It is only within the last two decades that the movement has really widened to include the needs of women industrially as well as socially and politically. The reason is obvious. It is only in this generation that democracy is at last beginning to come true. Much of the nineteenth century, since the reaction from the revolutionary period, was occupied with the forms of democracy, not its spirit, with its theory, not its practice.

Therefore the woman's movement may be divided roughly into three periods. Its birth was in the ideal of individual liberty; its adolescence endeavoured to translate that ideal into accepted practice; its maturity is recognizing that the future of democracy lies not in individualism but in collectivism, not in the demand for freedom, but in the demand for happiness. The world to-day knows that the Revolution killed neither class nor privilege, but only changed their forms. It recognizes that in the nineteenth century individualism came dangerously near to anarchy, and that without collective action people are no safer from the depredations of the selfmade freebooters of democracies than from the "divinely" appointed sovereigns of autocracies.

Feminism had its birth in a few minds of exceptional

brilliance, played on by a great idea. Its adolescence was developed by a group of cultivated but democratic women who sought by practical action to bring the conventions that governed their sex into harmony with that idea. Its maturity is reached to-day, when the workers and the leisured women are uniting with each other and with men to demand for both sexes opportunities, not *equal* to those men already possess, but *greater than either have hitherto enjoyed.* Feminism only comes of age when it ceases to be Feminism, and becomes Humanism. Whatever the future may hold, at this stage it has established its main point. It is re-mating the mental and spiritual interests of men and women, divorced so long by artificial barriers.

Beyond these stages we find to-day a new Feminism, introducing yet another set of theories which the future will sift and test. As the wave mounts to its crest, the force of the next wave carries it forward; as the fruit ripens the seed of next year's blossom is formed. Nature is rhythmic, and even man, her most rebellious child, obeys her law. The world has not yet understood the Feminism of to-day, and already that of to-morrow besieges its intelligence. These new theories, which the generations to come may practise, are discussed later in this book.

The growth of the woman's movement in its period of adolescence was quickened incalculably by the

development of industrialism. To understand this we must remember the maxim of the Encyclopædist, Helvétius, that mind is the creation of education and experience, or, as we should say, of environment. Until democracy conceded some schooling to girls they were practically without education; until machinery relieved women of incessant drudgery they had no opportunity to benefit by the education received. As for experience, if its sum for women is to be found in domestic duties, our female ancestors were blessed indeed, but if mental development demands some general and extra-domestic experience of life, they were most unfortunate. Machinery, that monster which is to-day at once the slave and the tyrant of humanity, modified profoundly the environment of men, but still more profoundly that of women. Mechanical inventions brought water, light, and heat into the houses, and carried refuse out. They infinitely reduced the actual labour of preparing food and clothing, and by transforming an agricultural people into a city-dwelling industrial one, brought the house-bound woman into touch with her kind and with mental stimulation.

To a hard-working agricultural people, children are, potentially, an economic asset. They are put to work young in field, dairy and kitchen, and there is usually work for all. Among city dwellers in the machine age, work is harder to find and more special-

ized. Children begin to be entered, financially speaking, in the debit account, and the voluntary limitation of families begins. Whether a large family with its corollary of high infant death rate is preferable for humanity to a system of limited births with a minimum of deaths is a question on which the public avoids pronouncements, while letting its acts speak for it. There can be little question, however, that the limited family is of benefit to the health and longevity of women, and none that it extends their leisure.

If the farmer's children were economic assets to him, his wife was more so. In the good old days beloved of sentimentalists, it was only the Arcadian shepherd who begged his mistress to "live with me and be my love." The real formula, had it been uttered, would have run somewhat like this: "Marry me and bear me a child each year. Cook my food, my children's and that of my farm-hands. Wash the dishes. Empty the water. Keep the house clean. Make the fire, bake the bread, make the jam, pickles, candles and soap. Spin, weave and dye all the stuffs needed for our clothing, and make the clothes. Knit the family stockings. Don't forget to sew my buttons on. Keep the scraps for the pigs. Run the dairy and feed the chickens. Keep the egg money if you like—you can buy the groceries with it. Teach the children their letters. See that they go clean to church and school. Nurse me when I am ill, and

always greet me with a fresh, smiling face when I come home after my hard day's work in the fields. Obey me in all things. Did I forget to mention that I shall need an extra hand at harvest time? Of course if I can afford to keep help enough indoors as well as out, you won't have to do all these things yourself; you will do some, and supervise all the others. Do this for me (I am glad to see you are a strong worker) and I will cherish you—*and support you for life!*"

The results of this essay in equal partnership are easy to trace. Go into any old grave-yard in New England, for instance, and read the head-stones. "Hepzibah, beloved wife of Simeon Doolittle, aged thirty-two. Also Sarah, his second wife, aged forty-three. Rachel, his infant daughter, aged two months; Timothy, his son, aged one year; Daniel, his son, aged four years. The Lord Giveth, and the Lord Taketh Away." And then a larger stone—"To the memory of Simeon Doolittle, who passed away in the fulness of his days, aged eighty-three."

When one wanders into those cool sanctuaries, and counts the many, many tiny headstones with foot-stones so pathetically near, when one remembers the mother's anguish at these children's birth, and her greater anguish at their death, one can appreciate the full flavour of "the good old times."

To the lives of women the industrial and scientific epoch brought enormous gains. For the first time in

history outside the aristocratic class, thousands of them enjoyed leisure for that education and experience which, whether or not it creates mind, according to Helvétius, at least forms it. Even the fact that children tended to become luxuries was not without its advantage to the new generation. A father in the professional or business class in a large city could not supply his daughter with productive work in his household, as could his farming ancestors, and competition ensured him an increasing difficulty in furnishing her support. It became expedient for him to permit her an education that would fit her adequately to support herself. As she did so, she became independent. It began to be no longer necessary for her to marry for her bread and butter; she had a choice of vocations. By this one fact her moral status was raised as it had not been in centuries, and the end began to be descried of society's greatest blasphemy against nature, the purchase of love.

Then, too, with the growth of science a broadening of religious concepts was taking place, and women were able to free themselves from such numbing traditions as that which lays upon their shoulders the responsibility for the "fall" of man.

These advantages of education, independence and leisure enabled women to look about them. With enough trained intelligence and self-respect fully to comprehend their condition, they became appalled

by it. In England and America they saw themselves strait-jacketed by the old English common law. Under that law it had been written that husband and wife were one, and that one the husband. The position could not be better stated. A married woman was so completely under coverture that she did not exist as a legal individual. She owned neither self-earned nor inherited property. She owned neither her own person nor a share in her children's. Equally with them she was subject to bodily chastisement by her husband, and owed implicit obedience to him. She could enter into no business or partnership in her own right, nor could she bring action in the courts in her own name. Indeed such a nonentity was she that her husband was presumed to be guilty of her torts. The inheritance laws were grossly unfair to her. In England the divorce law discriminated against her—as it still does. All the professions save that of teaching were closed to her, and equal pay for equal work was unknown either in fact or in principle. Some of these legal disabilities, however, pressed more particularly upon well-to-do women. The poor owned no property, could not afford divorce, and had no interest in the professions. But to the burden of poverty they shared with their class, and the burden of legal anachronisms they shared with their sex, the women of the poor had to add a third peculiarly their own. For them, industrialism must so far be entered

very largely on the side of loss. Although above the poverty line the era of machinery was a blessing to women, below the line it became a curse. Above the line it gave leisure, below it increased the burden of work. The women of the poor had always toiled, but usually in their own homes, or in the fields. They had worked near their men folk, and within sound of the cry of their children. Now millions were being forced by competitive industrialism into the factory and the mill. Separated from their families, goaded by avaricious masters, they were giving the flower of their youth, and too often of their virtue, in exchange for monotonous piece-work labour at starvation wages, performed under conditions about which they had not one word to say, direct or indirect. Sometimes their children laboured too; greed did not spare even these, nor chivalry protect them. For these women, the right of free contract—made in their own or their husbands' names—might be interpreted as the right to starve slowly instead of quickly.

It is obvious that these ills pressed much more hardly upon women than upon men. Their work did not end in the mill, but was continued at night by the fireside. They were doubly burdened, by their toil and their maternity. The race lost doubly through their misery, and little graves multiplied faster than before. This dual burden is as old as the world, but it was even more bitter under the new conditions than

the old. A husband might be expected to be a kinder master than a stranger; there was no "speeder up" for the cottage hand-loom. When industries were followed at home, the babies, though somewhat neglected, were not deserted. The old way was pernicious, the new seemed worse. Unorganized, unenfranchised, driven and sweated, these women had not even time for hope. Laws were not written for them, men did not regard them. At last other women began to pity them, and to hold out to them, all uncomprehended for a time, the comradeship and loyalty of the world's organized sisterhood.

During the adolescence of Feminism, then, in the nineteenth century, industrialism had modified women's lives in opposite ways. To one class it had come as an opportunity, to the other as a retardation. One class gained, the other lost. But within the gaining class was found a subdivision which, while it gained, lost also.

I have said elsewhere that work and responsibility are the great character builders. Until the machine era all women worked. Even the lady, though she might not labour, had to understand and supervise a multitude of domestic industries. Moreover, life on the whole was simple, luxuries being enjoyed only by a few. But with industrialism came a diffusion of wealth through the middle classes, with wealth came luxury, and with luxury idleness. In America and

England the newly rich began to aspire to gentility, of which they conceived idleness the chief badge. In England this vice attacked both sexes, but in America men were too virile, too near the pioneer stage, for its adoption. They contented themselves with expressing their gentility, as they often did their virtue, through their women. The wife became the shop-window of her husband's business. If she was expensive, he was prosperous. The doctrine of the "fine lady" was more and more imported from monarchical Europe to democratic America, and fine ladies must be like the lilies of the field, both as to toil and raiment.

If such women became idle, so were they irresponsible. In Europe, the position of aristocrat entails obligations. There are rigid (if artificial) social duties, there are duties to the state, to the land, and to the tenantry. The lady can exert great political influence by reason of her birth. She can have the sovereign's ear. She can even rule in her own right. More, where she has ruled it has been often brilliantly. The average of success for the reigning Queens is undoubtedly higher than for Kings in England. Out of a total of five, two have been preëminent and only one failed utterly. But in a republic, none of these opportunities exist for women. Democracy, which gave power to all men, stripped it from the few women who had possessed it. Under a monarchy birth is put above

sex, but in a democracy sex is preëminent, the lowest male being above the highest female. (I refer, of course, to the half-way democracies, in which only males are enfranchised.) Elizabeth was more directly powerful than President Wilson, but Jane Addams (until recently) had to fall back upon indirect influence. Her porter was one of a "sovereign people;" she was not. For the newly-rich fine lady there were no political and feudal responsibilities, and no fixed social duties; there were even few moral obligations, save that of sexual virtue.

If democracy and industrialism denied this class of woman her traditional labours and responsibilities, industrialism also bade fair to deprive her of her husband. A farmer's wife is his partner, a nobleman's lady is his helpmate, a business man's wife is often merely his advertisement. His active life is spent in strenuous activities with which she has no concern, his leisure is usually too fatigued to be profitably shared with her. Too often they cease to have anything in common except their children and the appurtenances of their homes. Hence arises that segregation of the sexes after marriage which appears to foreigners so notable a feature of American life, and of which I shall have more to say in a later chapter.

Deprived alike of work, obligations, and marital companionship, the well-to-do woman of the modern state became, very naturally, dissatisfied. Of course

she had her children, but they alone could not compensate for the loss of so much else. A moderate family of four or five does not take a woman's lifetime to bear and rear, nor has either biology or custom decreed child-caring as her sole activity. There are more hungers than one, and this class of woman has just as surely starved as has her sister of the slums. Her hunger produced restlessness, and clergy and educators fulminated against "the modern restless woman" without once realizing that her dissatisfaction was her chief sign of grace, and a promise of better things. Where an unnatural condition is acquiesced in, there is small hope of progress; apathy means stagnation, and stagnation decay.

Of course the majority of these luxury-weighted women knew no antidote for their disease. They reached blindly for something to fill the gap in their lives, and while some grasped at cultivation, or philanthropy, many more seized upon a medley of social entertainments, millinery, carriages, jewelry, bridge-whist, footmen and French models, vainly hoping to win satisfaction from surfeit.

These apparently were the main results of the new industrial epoch upon the women of the nineteenth century: a small class satiated with luxury, an enormous class deadened by poverty, and a large class between, neither inarticulate nor frivolous, neither too poor for comfort nor too rich for effort. This

middle class, proverbially the backbone of society, was not less the backbone of the woman's movement in its first stages. From it came the beginnings of organization in clubs, associations, and leagues. From it came the demand for higher education, for the single standard of morals, for equal chances in the professions, for the amendment of the obsolete common law, and for citizenship. Except for education, which of necessity was put first, there was no sequence in these demands. They arose singly or in groups according to the degree of development in different localities and the quality of leadership evolved. The bill of rights formulated at Seneca Falls in 1848 under the inspiration of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and other able women contained them all. From these middle class women came the fight against legalized vice. In England Josephine Butler headed a campaign against the infamous Contagious Diseases Acts, and was successful only at the cost of social ostracism and bodily danger.

But such women did more than voice demands and fight evils; they cultivated the art of being themselves, and, even in such abortive measures as their attempt at clothes reform in the "Bloomer" days, were willing to suffer for it. They began to see that no one, not even they themselves, knew of what women's brains and bodies were capable, because no

woman had ever been allowed freely to use them. They began to rebel at the unequal education of small children, which gave to the little boy all games of skill, ingenuity and strength, indoors and out, and to the little girl dolls. They recognized that the swimming pool could develop qualities infinitely more valuable to humanity than could the sampler, and resented their sex's exclusion from the one and forcible preoccupation with the other. They were the pioneers—brave, self-sacrificing, intense and somewhat bitter. They were derided, pelted and ostracized, but to-day they are lauded and revered. Even Florence Nightingale was ridiculed until her success in the Crimea silenced opposition. These women stood alone, the pampered of their kind laughed at them, the toilers ignored them. But to-day an army follows where they led, and their names are written on its banners. From above and below hands have reached to carry on their work, until there is no class, no group, barely a race of women which sends them no allies. They brought the women's army to the gateway of the promised land, but they died before it entered in. The freedom and advantages enjoyed by us under law and custom to-day we owe to the ideals of democracy, working through the enlightened minds and pitiful hearts of these women.

CHAPTER V

DIFFICULTIES WITH BROTHER

PERHAPS the most remarkable phenomenon in the whole woman's movement is the attitude of men toward it. I do not of course refer to exceptional men—a Condorcet, a Mill, a Lester Ward—but to that bundle of variability and obstinacy, sentimentality and practicality, which represents the Average Man in his dealings with women. Here was a movement which promised endless advantages to men. They were to exchange a drudge for a partner, a plaything for a friend, a servant for an equal. They might hope for enlightened mothers, independent sisters, companionable wives. Yet what was their attitude toward these changes? Almost invariably ridicule, contempt, and a blind opposition. Two generations ago this led to an increase of sex antagonism in women, but with success comes tolerance, the victorious can afford magnanimity, and the old bitterness only lingers in countries such as England where the main struggles are yet to be won. Englishmen, who learnt slowly, and through bitter loss, fairness to their colonies, have not yet learnt to deal fairly with their women.

Consequently they are in danger of earning that antipathy from a subject people which is the reward of autocrats.

There is no attraction without possible repulsion, and the fact of sex antagonism can be denied no more than the far more obvious fact of sex attraction. Civilization should minimize the former, while holding the latter within reasonable limits of expression. But it does not do so. Too often it overstimulates sex attraction to the danger point, so rendering an increase in its corollary inevitable. Celibates and misogynists are most numerous in a licentious age; in fact one may say that a misogynist is almost always a reformed rake. The greatest agency in the destruction of sex antagonism is of course the woman's movement, in that it has enabled men and women to enjoy that mutual respect and companionship which comes only with freedom and equality. But where the old sex domination is used, as in England, to retard this movement, the opposite result is obtained, and the day of true understanding between the sexes is further postponed.

Since the woman's movement seeks to minimize fundamental sex antagonism, those who oppose it are actually defeating the sex sympathy whose champions they proclaim themselves. All unconsciously, however, do they do so. The pathos of the opposition lies in its well-meaning ignorance. For one sensualist

who knows that he desires to keep woman in subjection for his own benefit, a dozen excellent family men are confident that it must be done for hers. But when men show themselves so profoundly ignorant of the real nature and wants of women, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that they have preferred to remain so. It seems hardly credible that man, who has guessed the riddles of the stars and bent all nature to his will, would have been so baffled by the heart of his own mate, had he ever set his genius to fathoming it. True, no one may fully understand either himself or another, but so far man, with his infinitely superior mental training, should have been able at least to know woman as well as she knows him. He has not tried. Herein lies the key to his opposition to her great cause, and the reason why bitterness, answering that opposition, is largely out of place. He has not really objected to Feminism because he has not known what it is. He has not known what it is because he has preferred to remain in ignorance. He has objected to what he thought was the movement of what he thought were women. Our task has been to force enlightenment upon his chosen benightedness.

In order to understand why the Average Man has chosen to oppose the woman's movement, and to tender him the pardon that comes with understanding, one must review his mental processes in regard to women rather carefully. Why has he consistently

chosen to oppose a desire he did not understand, in a person he did not know? First of all, because he has been a master. The curse of the master class is that it never seeks to understand its servants, but always to think for them. One must never forget that until recently the democratic ideal applied, in most minds, only to the male sex. The Average Man really believed himself, and still often does, divinely ordained to rule over his wife. That is his first excuse. Society had fastened on him those shackles worse than a slave's, which bind the imagination of a master.

His second excuse is that he is a lover. A man's love is so largely based on glamour, that only when it is very strong can it endure the light of truth on the beloved. Men have more passion, possibly—though that is open to question—than women, but certainly they have less love, because they do not father the beloved as the woman mothers her man. Therefore, to stimulate their love, men desire mystery. The beloved must be veiled, hidden, sphinx-like, esoteric. She must be variable, uncertain, never wholly won, so that he may never wholly cease to pursue. Though it is true that instinctively women pursue love at least as ardently as men, when it is attained they are more readily satisfied. They have this enormous advantage over men as disciples of Eros, that the apotheosis of their love comes after mating, in the child, which is its symbol, and which demands service, tenderness

and faith. Unhappily for men, they have little part in that miracle, so that for them all that follows on the supreme moment of mating is in the nature of an anticlimax. They can only serve love in one way, whereas women can give first love, then life, and then sustenance, three separate joys. Women are the priestesses of Love, men merely his acolytes. Women should pity men for this disability, realizing that as they give more, so they have more, than men—that it is easier for them to win love's thorny crown. It is certainly true that there is little in the bodily facts of sex to heighten man's spirituality, and much to heighten woman's. If man would develop a spiritual love he receives no help from Nature; he must create it by his own genius. But to woman Nature is at the same time supremely cruel and supremely kind. She forces both suffering and a soul upon woman, but she demands neither of man. If we postulate the existence of the spirit, as even science is beginning to permit us to do, we must admit that the Supreme Being, in chastening women, loves them, that He sets their feet upon the Path, while leaving men to shift for themselves.

In realizing these facts, which are so obvious as generally to escape attention, we can understand and even condone men's well-known inferiority in love. We can also understand why men seek that setting to the drama of love of which I have spoken, and which

is so superfluous to women. How grotesque is the idea of women demanding that men should paint their finger nails, decorate their hair and redden their cheeks in order to make themselves attractive! We imagine such acts feminine, and consider the man emasculated who performs them, but they are no more inherent in one sex than in the other. They are merely supplied by women in answer to the insatiable demand of men for new sensations in love which they, unlike women, are incapable of producing from within. Man, the lover, demands a sensuous and mysterious incense to veil the beloved; woman, desiring love above all things, acquiesces in his demand.

Now we begin to comprehend the instinctive aversion of man, the lover, to Feminism. He desires women veiled; Feminism demands that they march in the sun. He is stimulated by their artificiality; Feminism insists that they be themselves. He is gratified by the weakness which enhances his strength; Feminism teaches them to be strong. In fact, his instincts tell him that the way of love will be harder under the new régime, and his reason is only beginning to show him that it will be infinitely more worth while. Only when women lessen their appeal to man's senses do they increase their appeal to his spirit. Only when they refuse to be odalisques can they really become inspirations. This of course is an obvious truism. Men have always extolled the

woman who was above the artifices of sex, while seeking her who employed them. But Feminism, in demanding a much higher standard for all women, necessarily demands it for all men. It demands that men, good and bad alike, should love women for what they are, and not for what it amuses men to think they are. It demands infinitely more sincerity from men in regard to women, and a much higher mental and spiritual level of love. In other words, it demands an effort—and this men, whose dominant position has naturally fostered laziness in love, are quick to resent. Their resentment is instinctive, of course, even subconscious, but none the less real. Man's instincts are opposed to Feminism, and, king-like, he has not yet turned the splendid engine of his reason upon this obscure rebellion among his lieges.

After the master and the lover comes the father. The social usage which has specialized the modern father only as a provider is of course terribly unjust to men. The contemporary male has little opportunity to know his children, and less to educate them—he merely pays the bills. Preoccupied thus with their material needs, he is to be forgiven if he forgets that they have others. Bemused by an ignorance for which he is not wholly to blame, he conceives the chief demands of children to be, after a mother's arms, a mother's needle and saucepan. He concedes a place to the mother's love, expressed in the bestowal of

kisses and cookies, but omits to remember her brain. He persistently amuses himself with clever, light women, and marries good, stupid ones, so conceiving he has done his duty by the race. He trusts to nature suddenly to turn an uninformed half-trained girl into a completely successful mother, believing (with amazing credulity) that what he calls intuition can take the place of ability. With his habit of pigeonholing the qualities of women—tenderness for mothers, wit for friends, service for wives and passion for mistresses—the average man avoids marriage with an intellectual woman, conceiving her incapable of tenderness. I shall never forget the astonishment and relief of an Englishman of my acquaintance, who had, with many qualms, succumbed to the attraction of a particularly brilliant woman, on finding after marriage that she was extraordinarily loving, and even capable of addressing him as "Toddle-Oddles." There has been a terrible loss to succeeding generations through this prejudice of man's, who still feels the intellectual woman a "sport in nature," and remains, through his banishment from the home, in ignorance of the need for mental as well as intuitional strength in the equipment of mothers.

It is hardly his fault, then, if the Average Man, even in his capacity as a father, instinctively opposes Feminism. He is of course, in common with the average woman, a conservative—that is, one who would

rather bear the ills he has, than fly to others that he knows not of. He is also, more than the average woman, a romanticist—one who remembers only the beauty of the past, not its evils. For women life is, perhaps, too real to be romantic; they do not need colour to make it absorbing. Equipped with conservatism, plus romance, the man remembers the tenderness (but not the limitations) of his own mother, and desires all mothers to be like her. His mother did not, as the case may be, read Greek, own money, vote, or practise a profession—therefore no women must do so, or they will not be the mother-type as known to him. His objection to the salary-earning mother might be sounder if he had ever laboured to prevent women from taking in washing, doing prodigious feats of sewing, or wasting their strength on social "duties;" but the only extra-maternal activities he resents appear to be those which are new, or involve considerable financial advantage. This is the result of his conservatism, which we must not forget he shares with large numbers of women.

As for the Average Man's romanticism, women must be indulgent to it, for it is not without a touching quality. It is so removed from reality, strength, and real beauty, yet it is so pretty, and so pleasing. It is so tempting, yet so inevitably disappointing. It is strongest, of course, in young men, who are ignorant of life, so that I always expect a man under twenty-

five to be an anti-feminist, unless he has exceptional intelligence. An average romantic man, and nearly all men are romantic, prefers to see "Woman" as an exquisite and mysterious being removed from the realities of life, a creature to be conquered, guarded, protected and indulged, on whom no wind must blow and whose bloom must be shielded from the scorching sun. She is a "rose," and her infant a "rosebud." (After some years she will become an "old girl," and her child a "young limb," but your romanticist never looks forward.) This is his vision, and he does not wish to know that nature's real woman is a creature made to work and to suffer, with a back and arms strong for burdens and a heart courageous in agony, swift of foot, quick of hand and brain, and marked with the lines of thought that give character to beauty. He does not wish to know this, and he does not see the greater vision of love upon the free and wind-swept hills of life—strong and fearless—the splendid mating of life's highest form, the developed human pair.

But though romance and conservatism often blind men, so that they seek the false instead of the true, we must do them the justice of remembering that they *are* seeking, that they are never satisfied with their own discoveries, and never will be, until we can persuade them to follow the real vision. They know as well as we do that much is wrong with love and

marriage and parenthood, but they feel that by going backward they can repair these ills, whereas we know that by going forward we can cure them; it is for us to help our brothers.

It is easy to become impatient with men for being guided by their instincts instead of their reason in regard to women. But one must remember that the Average Man has had little opportunity to know women except in a personal relation, and that where personal, and particularly sex relations are concerned, reason is subordinated to instinct in both sexes. If we quarrel with men we must also quarrel with innumerable women who have been at least equally tenacious of custom. Every pearl enunciated by a man anti-feminist can be matched with one from the lips of a woman. Women need love so intensely that the sacrifice of anything which may call it forth entails little short of a martyrdom. The great mass of women have been taught that certain traits are essential to the winning of love, and they have naturally been slow to cast these off in favour of attributes which men seldom admire and often dislike. Women have honestly believed that happiness, if obtainable anywhere, was so under the old régime. They have wept at their daughters' wedding, but they have none the less urged the marriage on. Moreover, it has been necessary for material reasons as well as emotional and racial ones that they should attract men. One

of the easiest ways to do so was to agree with their opinions, and to avoid that originality of thought which always disgruntles the average conservative. Add to these powerful incentives the fact that until recently girls were not trained to reason at all, and we find no need to scorn the anti-feminist woman. Men of course have not this last excuse. Custom did not expect them, as it did women, to be creatures of instinct and sentiment. In theory, men are still the reasoning sex, but sex is the last subject on which they are willing to reason.

To all of the foregoing the answer might of course be made that in fundamental matters instinct is a surer guide than reason. This would perhaps be debatable if we were sure at what point natural instinct leaves off and prejudice, training and suggestion begin. But we are not. Nor could we tell excepting by the most drastic sociological experiments.

Suppose scientists undertook the education from birth of a boy and a girl of the same age and strength, and an equally good inheritance. Suppose these children were brought up in isolation, with absolutely no intercourse with the outside world except through the instruction of their trainers. Suppose all fiction, poetry and history were kept from them, and they were educated in the impersonal fields of science, mathematics and music. Then, at full growth, imagine a description being given them of the practice

of medicine, the function of voting, or the economic necessity of productive labour. If the youth instantly evineed repulsion at the thought of the maiden becoming a physician, voting, or working at a craft, we might then and only then declare that there was inherent in the male sex a *fundamental* instinct against the doctrines of Feminism.

We have some knowledge of our emotions, but little of our natural—as apart from our induced—instincts, except that they include the obvious desires for food, shelter, play and love, which last includes combat, possession, and perhaps jealousy. Even were psychology and sociology a thousandfold further advanced, however, the "instinct" argument would remain open to the retort that if we depended upon it social relations would still be at the club-and-cave stage. But so hardly does the average mind take to the habit of reasoning that I have heard very well educated people, both men and women, declare with pride that they did not *think* at all about the woman question, they simply *knew* it was wrong. Against that attitude reformers of all kinds have battled through history, but never with more difficulty than in the cause of women.

Throughout the feminist movement the thing which perhaps women have found it hardest to admire in the Average Man has been his jocosity. The woman who will make a joke about the facts of sex is an ex-

ception, the man who does so is the rule. Women have been accused of having no sense of humour, and to this extent the accusation is undoubtedly just. I think there are many women who would rather have a brick thrown at their sex than a joke. A brick bruises the body, but a joke may kill the soul, and in some matters brutality is less dangerous than levity. This facetious attitude toward sex (sometimes no doubt only a pose to cover self-consciousness) has been extended by the Average Man to cover every ambition of the modern woman.

I have spoken of the ridicule with which Florence Nightingale's expedition to the Crimea was hailed. Unfortunately not merely her pretensions as a nurse were assailed, but her status as a woman. The most offensive possible suggestions were made, in so-called humorous lampoons, as to her reasons for going to the front. The ancient college girl joke has long since been forgotten in America, but it is barely dead in England. In my own school days I very well remember the perennial appearance in comic papers of the "blue stocking," or intellectual woman. This personage was always represented as of enormous height, with short hair, a man's waistcoat, number nine size feet, and a forbidding countenance. She usually carried what to-day would be called a T. R. "big stick," and was depicted trouncing a diminutive male. That the pioneer women of the 'sixties did occa-

sionally affect mannish attire is undeniable, but the legend clung for decades after this sartorial eccentricity had passed away. The same horrific shape was used a little later, minus the "big stick," to depict the woman doctor, and the pretensions of women to the legal profession were similarly greeted. To-day of course the identical cartoon is used all over the world to represent the "Suffragette,"—and this in spite of the fact that the only group of franchise-seekers who even metaphorically use the club are the English militants, a body led by exceptionally small women, affecting particularly feminine attire. A short time ago a prize was given in America for a drawing showing "The Three Sexes," man, woman, and suffragist. The suffragist was the counterpart of the "blue stocking" of a generation ago. An old joke is labelled a chestnut, and its teller voted a bore, but this mythical figure seems to spell perpetual mirth. Even Americans, who pride themselves on their original wit, seem to derive exquisite amusement from this ancient bogey, if one may judge from the output of their leading humorous journal. A friend has told me of the gales of mirth which, twenty years ago, assailed the suggested employment of a woman clerk in the architect's office where he worked. The cachinnations that two generations back greeted the female lawn tennis player were not more explosive than those which to-day resound at the mention of a woman

legislator. Five years ago the notion of women police supplied the last word in entertainment—to-day these officials are rapidly becoming commonplace. An American humorist lately threw a masculine audience into hysterics by demanding to know what a President would look like with long hair? He was much disconcerted when the Platform asked in return what George Washington *did* look like with long hair. Such sallies form the staple anti-feminist arguments of the Average Man. He finds our pretensions excruciatingly humorous. I sometimes wonder if he realizes that we occasionally reciprocate his sentiments.

Unfortunately the enjoyment by the Average Man of woman's vagaries did not extend to his own family. Let his wife desire the use of her own money, or his daughter education or a profession, and the humorist became a tragedian. One of the greatest achievements of the woman's movement in the past century has been the elimination of the domestic tyrant. The husband and father, whose women folk tremble at his step and heave devout sighs of gratitude when the front door closes behind him, seems to be almost a thing of the past. How much the married women's property acts and the higher education of girls have contributed to this result it would be interesting to ponder. That this parent was, until recently, a commonplace in England, nobody will deny. I suspect that he was frequent in New England, but in my own

time I have not found him in America as a whole. In this respect a millstone has indeed been lifted from the necks of women. The terrible suffering caused by the autocratic position of the father and husband throughout history is not pleasant to remember. From the girl forced into a loveless marriage through the agency of bread and water, and the famous little novelist hiding her manuscript beneath her sewing, to the last daughter denied an intensely desired college education, the list is endlessly pitiful and pitifully endless. Studying it, the modern woman should indeed be filled with gratitude that she was born in the present age.

This tyrannical position of men, while probably giving them much less pleasure than they imagined, was a privilege they were very loath to relinquish. Nowhere was this better shown than in the fight, on both sides of the Atlantic, against the married women's property acts. The arguments uttered in all legislative bodies against these measures of justice are extraordinarily familiar to one accustomed to the anti-suffrage orations of to-day. If women owned their own pocketbook, they would be unsexed; the sacred home would be overthrown, and divine law set at defiance. In fact one gentleman in the New York legislature of 1854 declared that such an act would establish upon the ruins of marriage "what will be in fact and in principle but a species of legal-

ized adultery." Nor were English parliamentarians one whit behind the Assemblyman. The culmination of a similar debate at Westminster was reached in a speech which proved that as soon as wives owned their own money *they would spend it upon other men!*

This argument evinces a fundamental modesty which is not common in my knowledge of Englishmen. It is singular that the Member seemed to see no reason why a wife should love her husband except the prosaic one of his control of her money. Indeed modesty of this description seems to be a concomitant of man's obstruction of Feminism. At every stage in the upward march of women, we have been assured that if they were educated, owned money, or their children, entered professions, or voted, as the case might be, they would not only not be loved by, but would no longer love their husbands. The only thing which enabled women to perform this difficult feat faithfully was apparently that they did not own money, vote, or study mathematics. This extraordinary distrust of his own charms seems to me to do greater credit to the Average Man's modesty than to his observation.

Unfortunately he could not distrust himself without distrusting women. Perhaps the most pathetic disclosure brought about by the whole woman's movement is man's doubt of the strength of woman's sex. It can only be the result of that deliberate blind-

ness to her real nature and desires to which I have referred. He seems to imagine that her sex is a garment which she is capable of laying aside at will. He seems to believe further that the deepest attributes of her sex, love, tenderness, desire for children, can disappear at the touch of extraneous circumstance. One hopes and believes that it is not because his own standards of love are low that he so readily distrusts hers. One greatly fears that the violence he too often permits himself against love in his hot youth, committed as it must be through the agency of the least representative class of women, has blurred his powers of judgment of the sex as a whole. Be that as it may, he must reassure himself. Fashions in love vary, ideals change with the generations, the number of frivolous women augments or diminishes with the standards of their time, but underneath these surface fluctuations the deep racial needs of women remain the same. They are three. A few women need only one, some need two, but the great mass need all three—love, children and work.

There is no doubt that in America to-day, and to a less degree in Europe, side by side with the greatest rise of earnest women in favour of finer ideals that the world has ever seen, there exists a large number of empty-headed and shallow-hearted members of the sex. In an earlier chapter I have tried to show how the growth of luxury and idleness in the middle class

has brought these evils in its train, and how little the individual victims of these conditions are responsible for them. Undoubtedly men themselves have heightened these evil fruits of industrialism by their interpretation of the word "chivalry." With the best intentions in the world, the Average Man, more especially in America, in endeavouring to give everything to his wife, has made it difficult for her to give adequately in return. Our modern American women are brought up too softly to develop heroic, or even deeply womanly, qualities. As far as that is true the cry "unsexed" has some justification, but the feminists are the last group at which it should be levelled.

The insistence on "chivalry" is the subtlest injustice of the Average Man against women. A protected class can never be strong, and the Knight was also the Master. There are of course two chivalries. One is a grace which flowers in the spirit irrespective of age, sex, or race—the divine grace of the strong to the weak. The other is a badge of class. The latter type was strong in Europe in the eighteenth century, when the position of women was at its lowest ebb. It was well illustrated by the courtier who bowed low to the duchess in the drawing room and insulted the housemaid on the stairs. It was found in the old South, as negress slaves could testify. It is expressed by the American business man who buys his wife American Beauty roses but fails to give her a dress allowance.

The Average Man has never paused to analyse this type of chivalry, and so is deeply hurt when we affirm we have had a little too much of it. Yet perhaps it is the most insidious foe that Feminism fears.

This false chivalry, combined with the narrowing effects of class, is a great breeder of the anti-feminist type of woman. It is from the luxurious "upper" class that this type is almost wholly drawn, and it is amazing to what lengths such women will go to maintain the class privileges of their order. One must never forget that the Average Man does not fight Feminism unsuccoured by the other sex. In England women of the aristocracy, with notable exceptions, have consistently blocked the movement at every stage. With them, as in the days before the dawn of democracy, class came first, sex second. They would defend their order even if by so doing they worked irreparable wrong to women of another class. They were normally and properly outside Feminism, because they were outside democracy. A typical instance of this fact occurred during Josephine Butler's magnificent fight against the Contagious Diseases Acts. These acts applied to garrison towns, and were passed in the supposed interests of the army, that is, of the established order. Under them no poor or unknown girl was safe from unjust arrest and forcible examination at the hands of the police, nor had the daughters of the poor any redress for wrong-

ful interference. No greater insult could well have been offered women than the whole form of these acts, yet in the midst of the magnificent rally of middle class women against them, five hundred female aristocrats were found to petition Parliament in their favour.

Amid all the false instincts, false chivalry, prejudices, and ignorances of the Average Man toward the new woman, amid all the class-bound and luxury-bred concurrence of many women, the real chivalry, real knowledge and real insight of the Exceptional Man shines "like a star in blackest night." Men and women are after all not so unlike but that they can easily, with a little mental effort, join hands across the gulf of sex that separates while attracting them, and find the common ground of their humanity. Men can point to no cause of theirs throughout history which has not been championed by women. Individual women have of course always been championed by men, but it has needed the woman's movement to call forth the far finer chivalry entailed by their collective championing. It would be difficult to overestimate the passion of admiration with which our modern Andromedas regard this Perseus type. It is a great list. Beginning with Plato, and including, as I think we may claim, Him whose friendship and championship created a new world for women, it waited until His democracy was reborn to swell its numbers to an

army. The Encyclopædists were followed by the great Spencer, who could see only environment as a cause for the mental inequalities of men and women, and by John Stuart Mill, for whom the historian, Buckle, claims first place in his generation as an advancer of knowledge. Following Mill's trumpet call comes a list which is rapidly turning into a majority. I do not hesitate to say that where broad-minded and good men divorce themselves from sex-prejudice and really lend their reason to the cause of women, they almost inevitably uphold it.

CHAPTER VI

HER COMING OF AGE

To-day the Woman's Movement has come of age. It is educated and self-conscious, it has served its apprenticeship, and begins to know its work. Its whole adult life lies before it. But just as woman's life does not come to full fruition until it is joined with man's, so this movement in its adult years will inevitably merge with the great progressive causes of the world and become rounded into Humanism. Once women stand beside men in education, freedom, and responsibility, both can go forward together. Meanwhile on all sides women are preparing themselves to use their inheritance.

The struggles of the early years are of course far from concluded. Comparatively few countries have won equal suffrage. The prejudice against women in the professions remains a serious check to them in many lands. The common and statute law still need amendment in England and America, and the Code Napoléon in France. Germany's ruler has periodically instructed women in the limitations of their sphere. Southern Europe is very backward,

and in the East Feminism is still in swaddling-clothes. England labours a generation behind the opinion of her best minds. Even where the law grants opportunity for women, custom still withholds it. But there is no barrier to their development which has not been broken down in some countries, while in a few all have disappeared. Theory has been translated into experience, and it is no longer necessary to answer a prophecy of disaster with a counter-prophecy of success; facts and figures speak louder than oratory. Women know that the beams which lighten their darkness portend the rising sun; they know that once the light has been let in the darkness will never again suffice. The principle of equality of opportunity having been established in certain countries, conservatives and sentimentalists can no more prevent its ultimate adoption in all than they can stop evolution itself. This, I think, is commonly understood, and there are few anti-feminists who hope to do more than put off the evil hour.

Meantime it is good to be a woman to-day. In every land our sisters are stirring, feeling the prickings of their growing wings, lifting their hands to the sun. As a sex women are alive in the world as never before. They are learning the great lesson of co-operation, which has enabled men to win continents. They are learning sex-loyalty. How many times have I heard men assert the impossibility of women

putting the needs of other women, or indeed of any cause, before those of their immediate family! It is a commonplace argument against equal suffrage. Every great religious movement of the world refutes it—but let that pass. To-day any feminist has among her personal acquaintances women who have sacrified individual love or advantage to the cause of their sex, or to political ideals. A woman official in a western prohibition town recently ran her husband into gaol for smuggling and selling liquor. Another woman was asked by her husband to vote in favour of a corrupt candidate, who, if elected, would award the husband a commission worth thousands to his business. She satisfied herself that the candidate was entirely undesirable, and felt obliged to vote against him. More than one girl of my acquaintance has broken her engagement rather than marry a man who was working against the cause of women. I know of a woman of the world who denied herself to the man she loved rather than injure another woman whom she did not know, not from the religious or even moral scruples which the code of her class and race did not demand, but because of the sex-loyalty which Feminism had taught her. When I heard of this case it renewed my faith that the solidarity of women will ultimately do more than any one thing to solve the greatest and oldest of all problems.

Women are organizing, and the more they organize

the more they learn the value of the feminist doctrines. There are twenty-six nations in the International Woman Suffrage Alliance; brown, yellow and white women attend its conferences. The International Council of Women, an organization of workers, philanthropists, and educationalists, passed a magnificent list of progressive resolutions at its last convention, including one for equal suffrage. The National Federation of Women's Clubs of America has just done the same, as has the National Teachers' Association. In mothers' circles, child-culture groups, temperance associations, suffrage and political organizations, in the churches and in every possible variety of literary, philanthropic, educational and civic clubs and leagues, women of all ages, races and classes, rich and poor, ignorant and informed, are pooling their common interests.

Women are being educated. In America to-day city and state schools and universities are open to all citizens irrespective of race or sex, coeducation being universal except in private institutions. In the East, where a Harvard, Yale or Princeton keeps alive the male traditions, a Vassar, Bryn Mawr, or Wellesley offers equal advantages to women only. These women's colleges do not peep fearfully from beneath the ægis of the dominant masculine universities, vainly pleading for the degrees their scholars win but never receive, as do their English contemporaries.

They give their own degrees, and are proud of them. The greatest medical school in America is open to both sexes, but women still lack opportunities in the finest eastern law schools, while enjoying them in the West. Many disadvantages and disabilities still cumber the path of the professional woman in America, but the door of no profession is wholly closed to her.

France, of course, allows both medicine and law to women, but England still assumes that the sex is capable of saving your life, but not of drawing up your will. The principle of equal pay for equal work is established in many departments of public life in America and Australasia, but the British official has not yet persuaded himself to examine the proofs that equality of work between the sexes is possible.

Women are being developed physically. Doctors no longer proclaim costal breathing one of their sexual characteristics, and the fainting female is seldom seen and never admired. Not only have women lungs, but they have legs, not only have they arms, but they have biceps. In the classes where physical culture is available girls are inches taller and infinitely stronger than they were. They begin to ride cross-saddle; they golf, bicycle, row and swim. In a word, they are permitted the use and development of their bodies. They are physically alive.

Women to-day are learning the laws of life, and

some control over its processes. Their maternity is becoming conscious, and they are less often lied to about those facts which it is most racially necessary they should know. We are even beginning to see the end of that most revolting form of false modesty, which taught mothers to be ashamed of the evidences of their approaching glorification. The prurient prudery which forces the pregnant woman to hide from the light of the sun during those months when she most needs its warmth and cheer, is happily inconceivable to the Latin mind. The physical and mental suffering it must cause the mothers of our own race is difficult to face with equanimity. But it is going, like the other lies of a false puritanism.

Women are not only learning companionship with each other, but with men. As their interests are no longer bounded by the Kaiser's famous "church, children, and kitchen," they are able to enjoy the society of those who also have other interests. Enormously increasing numbers of women know what it is to be a man's pal as well as his sweetheart, nor are men slow to appreciate the change. The mindless and spineless girl, however pleasing to the eye, has little chance of social success to-day. In increasing numbers women read the newspapers, not the ladies' papers, and in the dim future we may hope that editors will find this out. In reading these newspapers women are setting in motion the same trains of

thought that men are following throughout the country, and the minds of the sexes are being encouraged to grow toward and not away from each other. All these advantages are opening to women, and a thousand others which it would be tedious to enumerate. Very broadly speaking, we are coming to an end of the century-old effort of one sex to catch up with the human development of the other, and though much ground has yet to be covered, we are in sight of the door of progress that both can enter side by side.

Of all the organizations developed by women to-day which I have seen or read of, the women's clubs of America appear to me, perhaps, the most fruitful of future good. They are neither social, philanthropic, educational, nor civic, but they are all these things, and increasingly the last. They spread in a network over the whole country, and are organized as a national body. They are non-partisan politically, and non-sectarian. They are not without class-snobbishness in the large cities, but on the whole they are wonderfully democratic, and in almost all of them a college degree counts for more than a long purse. They often own their own buildings, and, excepting in the South, rare is the town where they do not exist. There are villages in New England where the only club is the woman's club, and the only lay building suitable for public assembly has been built by them

out of their hard-collected pence. There are excellent women's political organizations in England, and admirable social and literary clubs in London, but the range of these is limited indeed in comparison with the appeal of the American women's clubs.

Founded as a result of the leisure which industrialism brought to the middle class, and in answer to the desire of thoughtful women to use that leisure worthily, the most striking attribute of these clubs is their thirst for knowledge. Far more than love of money, the distinguishing characteristic of Americans is curiosity, and this quality of youth, which can be among the highest or the lowest of humanity's gifts, which is responsible not only for the yellow press but for all the magnificent scientific discoveries of America, is purified in the women's clubs into an almost touching teachableness. No class in the world will so willingly listen to so many lectures as will these club women. No student is more avid of knowledge than are they. Women of other countries too often remain satisfied with the education they receive at school. Not so the American; she educates herself to the day of her death. Of course the quality has its dangers. The hunt for knowledge often turns up strange half-truths, and the faker of information, as of remedies, has many victims in the States, but the mental stimulation gained is worth countless mistakes.

These clubs, at first merely literary, were founded in the face of the usual opposition. "Culture club" was a common term of ridicule. Clergy and ladies' journals prophesied with unerring lack of originality the speedy downfall of the home. Nevertheless they flourished, because they answered a need which only those who know American small town life can fully appreciate. They flourished, and they did not stand still. Indeed nothing does stand still in young, faulty, vital America, whose speed is at once the cause of her failure to savour living, and her extraordinary abundance of life. Like her, these clubs moved fast. Beginning as the repositories of polite cultivation, they are to-day one of the greatest potential forces of civic reform in the world. Women's group activities never long remain divorced from their fundamental vocations. If you want to interest a group of married women vitally (and most of these club-women are married), you do not talk to them about Browning, but about the Montessori method, child hygiene, pure milk, juvenile delinquency, or the infant mortality rate. This is the reason for their growing enthusiasm for woman suffrage, and explains the endorsement given it by the last Federation convention. The club members, moving with their times, have realized that government spells these things, and, sometimes with reluctance, are therefore demanding a part in government.

A large percentage of these club women have reached middle life, that is, are no longer engaged in child-bearing. Their level of education is good, their standard of morality beyond reproach. They are drawn almost entirely from the class that does not have to make its livelihood outside the home, and therefore, whether they be the wives of small farmers or multi-millionaires, they have some leisure. They are well organized and they have increasing esprit de corps. No ulterior motives move them. They constitute an enormous reservoir of power almost untapped, a vast potential force for good. And America needs them sorely. Her men are grotesquely overworked, her civics are a pathetic muddle. There is no adequately large class of men of leisure and integrity to undertake the duty of setting that muddle straight. The organized club-women are almost ready. Among them could be found officials who would supplement the labours of their harassed brothers in every department of civic life. There is, and will be found among them, a solid vote to be cast for civic reform. No more encouraging sign exists of what will be accomplished by women than the work these clubs are already undertaking, hampered in the main as they still are by disfranchisement.

The splendid work of the Woman's Club of Chicago is too well known to need description. The women of that city are perhaps the most efficiently

energetic in the country, and they have great leadership. There is hardly a department of civic life which they have not laboured to improve, and it is noteworthy that after having tried the virtues of indirect influence to the full they saw fit to obtain the direct power of the ballot. The instantaneous winning of three measures for which they had long vainly petitioned (the modernization of the city's garbage plants, the creation of a boys' court, and the appointment of women police) proved the wisdom of their tactics. I mention Chicago merely as an instance, for there are clubs all over the country that are striving for similar objects, for juvenile courts, probation officers, adequate factory and food inspection, sanitation, the improvement of the schools, and a hundred other ends. When one compares this sense of personal obligation with the apathy that paralyzed the woman of the old régime where public questions were concerned, one has a right to be proud of the achievements of the woman's movement. Even the very anti-feminists themselves are caught in the current of service, and find themselves performing the acts of Feminism while loudly deploring its doctrines.

Of course there are the inevitable backwaters, where the tide of progress hardly ripples the stagnant pools of thought. Even among the most progressive nations, in Australasia or the American West, there are inevitably thousands of women ill-educated and

tradition-bound who are satisfied in a sleek, unthinking way with the comfortable limitations of their lot, or acquiesce with torpid fatalism in life's disillusionments. Until eugenics has become a custom instead of a joke, we shall continue to breed a race only a fragment of which can wear life like a flower, or like a sword. Apathy and stupidity will continue to abound, though decreasingly, until we better the very stuff of which our children are made. This again is chiefly woman's task, but one which she cannot hope to perform until she is strong in her own strength and self-respecting in her own freedom. By as much more as she is stronger and freer to-day than she was in the eighteenth century, has the feminist movement succeeded.

While admitting the backwaters, however, and even conceding them still to the majority, we must not consider them typical of our day. If they were, the woman's movement would be far from the coming-of-age which we claim for it. The typical woman of her time is she who is neither behind nor before it, but illustrates best its distinctive features. The distinctive feature of the twentieth century is neither the department store nor the tango-tea. Extravagance is an old story, and so is frivolity—they are merely on a larger scale to-day, in common with every other aspect of civilization. The distinguishing marks of the twentieth century, those which set it

apart from all that has gone before, are of course the rise of labour, of women, and of social service. The first is the most immediately important, though racially speaking I think it will ultimately yield place to the second, which affects half the race and all posterity. The last is, to some extent, the flower of the first two. Earth's disinherited are rising about us, whether they be workers or women, and in full sight of their wrongs we have no longer heart to cry, "What have I to do with you!" We are being too insistently reminded that we are our brothers' keepers to be able comfortably to forget. Some radicals tell us that all the stirrings of the public conscience are no more than the frightened self-defence of a tottering system, that the improvements in public morality are so many sops thrown by capital to stay the fangs of labour; but, as with all fanatics, the vision of this group is limited. True, humanity's acts are still chiefly influenced by greed, selfishness and ignorance, and the millennium is still infinitely distant. But hardly and gropingly, with slow and hesitating steps, a new knowledge is moving amidst the primitive impulses of the race. We begin to know ourselves collectively, to comprehend the profoundly scientific as well as mystic utterance of Christ when He proclaimed, "Inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these my children, ye do it unto me." We are beginning to know scientifically as well as ethically that

poverty, disease and death, war, tyranny and immorality are our individual concerns. To put it brutally, we begin to understand the ultimate futility of endeavouring to benefit at the expense of others. The modern method of preaching against war is to show it not as a spiritual evil, but as a financial calamity; wages are being raised not only in the interests of justice, but of efficiency. Education, transportation, and democracy are so unifying society that the needs of a part are being recognized as the needs of the whole. Civilization has reached a point where man's very selfishness demands his altruism.

Here is woman's opportunity. She cannot reach her full stature save in a humanitarian age; and a socially conscious age must have her help in order to attain its fullest growth. This is why, as I have already said, Feminism only comes of age when it develops into Humanism. Anyone who is able to read the times must see that there has never been an epoch in the world's history in which the special abilities and energies of women have been needed as they are to-day. Even the opposition grants this to a great extent, and centres its quarrel rather on women's tools than on their work itself. It applauds the civic, philanthropic and religious activities of women so long as they remain unofficial; indeed in England the political parties themselves are delighted that half their electioneering work should be done by women,

so long as the rewards of their labour are sedulously withheld from them. The difference between the modern feminist and anti-feminist is after all mainly that one approves, and the other withholds, payment for values received. Anti-feminists are still somewhat at the same level of development as the aristocratic dandy, who thinks his tailor's bill an impertinence, and expects gratitude when another order takes the place of a cheque. They never indicate a desire that women should cease to serve, only that they should cease to demand. Indeed the need for women's service is so great and so obvious as to force upon the opposition the nicest tight-rope balancing of argument, so that we see English anti-feminists urging municipal candidature upon women, and their American compeers applauding the appointment of a woman to one of New York's great civic offices.

The coming of age of Feminism having synchronized with a vast wave of social service, and the most effective tool of social service being an organized vote, it is inevitable that the most salient demand of feminists to-day should be for the ballot. So dominant has this demand become that it has overshadowed all others, and the public is apt to regard the woman's movement as synonymous with the suffrage cause. This it is not. Feminism is a tree, and woman suffrage merely one of its many branches. Some of these branches are essential to the life of the

tree, others are not. Some grow strong and put forth shoots in their turn, others blossom prematurely, wither young, and drop from the trunk. Meanwhile the tree towers up into the sun with its crown of sturdy growths, and its abortive shoots lie forgotten in the shadow below, leaving hardly a scar upon the great stem to mark their death. Only a few people see this tree as a unit. All who do know that woman suffrage is one of its essential growths. But the majority still concentrate their gaze upon one branch or another, whichever seems to them most fair, and the parent trunk is lost to sight amid the multiplicity of its offspring's leaves. Suffrage has rallied to its march thousands of conservative women who are indifferent, or even opposed, to some newer branches of the tree, while those who are absorbed in certain later and eccentric growths are sometimes amusingly contemptuous of the older limbs. They forget that the topmost crown could not flourish if the wide boughs below did not help the tree to breathe. They are sometimes, too, in danger of forgetting that if the great roots of the tree were not anchored deep in the soil of woman's nature itself, in her motherhood, her strong tenderness, and her service, the whole growth would perish.

Apart from the dominant feature of woman suffrage, stimulated by the reform movements of the day, apart from the education of women, their

organization and growing sex-loyalty, there are two other conspicuous features of Feminism in this time of her coming-of-age. One is the electric world-wide sweep of women's indignation at the dual standard of morality; the other is her recognition of the danger of parasitism to her sex.

The moral question has undoubtedly been faced by women as the direct result of their admission to the study of medicine. If men had wished to remain secure in the defences of the double standard, they should have fought the women doctors even more strenuously than they did. Until within the last few years the mass of women, in spite of considerable educational advantages, remained ignorant of the hideous danger to themselves and their children of venereal disease. Spiritually they deplored men's wild oats, but physically they did not fear them. Now, however, while doing man the justice of recognizing that he himself was, until recently, largely ignorant of the extent of these dangers, they give credit to the women doctors for their own enlightenment, and for that forewarning which is forearming. I should not hesitate to say that the knowledge of this evil, with its terrible base in commercialized vice, has contributed more recruits to the suffrage cause than any other one fact except industrialism,—not because many women are bigoted enough to believe that immorality can be legislated out of existence, but because they are no longer willing to leave their

fate in the hands of a sex who have signally failed to protect their most vital needs.

With this awakening has come an entire change of attitude toward the girl victims of the system. In the old days virtuous women formed a close corporation whose backs were rigidly turned to the guilty, and whose eyes could not even be opened by pity to their distress. To-day women regard these sisters of theirs not as the wicked, but as the wronged, and not deserving so much of condemnation as of assistance. Until very recently a girl-mother was ruthlessly hounded from society, and not least by women; to-day the cry is no longer "Brand her" but "Find the father," and there are few indeed among feminists who would refuse her shelter. Women are weary of the double standard. They no longer believe that what is spiritual and physical death to them is the law of life to their brothers. Also they are beginning to be unwilling to tolerate the theory of a personal exemption based upon the annihilation of other women's daughters.

Finally, large numbers of women are uneasy at the obvious inequalities in the economic output of their sex. They see the idea that the male supports the female demolished at a hundred points, and they wonder what their own place is among the débris. They see that of all fallacies the conception that the woman is exempt from labour by reason of her maternity is the most fallacious. Women are on the contrary too often rewarded in inverse ratio to

their fruitfulness. The wives of the poor, who still produce large families, are obliged to toil for these families both outside the home and in, while the daughter of the rich with her single child lives in luxury. Moreover, she who contributes to her husband's welfare by working for him in the kitchen receives no pay, while she whose establishment comprises a dozen servants is often in receipt of a large allowance. Women in particular who have learned a trade or profession which brings them economic independence, though they may gladly lay it aside for a time at the call of maternity, find it difficult to believe that marriage, and a few children who all too soon leave the nest in search of education, must be paid for by life-long abstention from economic productiveness and from practice of a craft that has grown dear to them. They see the toiling poor overburdened and feel their own pack too light. They begin to desire if it be possible a levelling up and down of women's work, so that the extremes may not vary so much from the average. All women need some work; no woman should have too much. Just as thoughtful feminists resent the arbitrary moral division of their sex into the protected and the preyed upon, so they resent their equally adventitious economic classification into the sweated and the spoilt.

In a word, women are becoming not only sex-loyal, but democratic, not only woman-conscious, but class-unconscious.

PART II

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

CHAPTER VII

THE DRAMA HOLDS THE MIRROR UP

THERE is no truer guide to the progress of a movement than the estimation in which it is held by the outside public. If we limit our enquiries to the opinions of experts we naturally obtain a very one-sided view. But with the best will in the world it is not easy to ascertain with definiteness what the general attitude toward any special cause may be. There are, however, certain sure guides to popular opinion, and among them none are more trustworthy than the arts, which, in addition to their æsthetic and educational value, serve a further purpose as barometers to the wind of progress. Therefore, before discussing the problems of Feminism as they exist to-day, we may well consider what witness is born by the arts to the popular acceptance of woman's changing status.

Only the very highest type of genius stands above and beyond his age, the generality of artists being like kites which, soaring, are yet tied. The artist interprets what seems to him most beautiful in the world in which he lives—he seldom sees into another. It

follows that if his age is generous and strong his work will be the same, while if its ideals are weak, shallow, and sentimental, his muse is equally superficial. An artist must live, and to live he must please his contemporaries. Now and then he dies, to inspire a later age. But for the most part the string of his kite is cut short or long to fit the vision of his day. Though the "il faut vivre" of the artist has doubtless lost the world many masterpieces, it nevertheless offers compensating advantages. The student of human progress can often gain more knowledge of the life of an epoch by studying its songs, pictures and monuments than by ploughing through the pages of the historians.

If this be true of the arts as a whole, it is doubly true of the drama. No other art is so wholly bound to please in order to exist, no other is so democratic in its appeal. Since, in order to pay for its elaborate machinery, the drama must draw to its patronage the widest possible public, it is obliged to deal with those themes that are of interest to all. Religion has a fundamental appeal, and religion of course mothered the drama. Warfare, adventure and politics, too, are of interest to many, and the drama deals with these things. But there is only one subject that is perennially absorbing to all, young and old, rich and poor, master and man, irrespective of colour, creed or class. This is human nature, which is half woman nature, and particularly that aspect of human nature which

has to do with sex. Sex is therefore inevitably the perpetual preoccupation of the drama. No art deals so continually with woman, and it is to the theatrical barometer that one turns first to gauge the progress of Feminism.

I have already referred to the splendid witness borne by Shakespeare to the development of the woman of the Renaissance. One may trace the fall in her position through the ridicule of Molière and the coarseness of Restoration comedy, to the frivolity of the patch and powder period, mirrored by Goldsmith and Sheridan. By the mid-nineteenth century the dramatic heroine had even lost her pre-Revolutionary gaiety and had become, like her sister of the novel, insufferably dull. In long curls of gold she drifted across the stage, alternately melted by love and by tears. She was weak in every quality save virtue, and her only victories were involuntarily won by the appeal of her innocence. Her life began with her first ball and ended with marriage. Dramatists, pursuing love and adventure, instinctively felt that for woman both ended at the door of matrimony, and did not care to follow her across its threshold. Occasionally one more daring than his fellows would admit that the armour of innocence was not always proof, and we had the spectacle of the fallen angel, half forgiven, expiating another's sin through consumption or the cloister. As late as my own childhood I well remem-

ber an edifying Adelphi melodrama entitled "Shall We Forgive Her?" and dealing with a variant of this theme. It showed an innocent girl, who had been outraged by a villain in the Australian wilds, returning home first to hide her shame, and then to admit on her knees before a relentless father that she "was a mother." The rest of the drama was occupied with endless arguments by the interested parties on the title-theme.

This dramatic effort, already old-fashioned when I saw it, was fairly typical of the English and American native output in the middle of the last century. The French drama never fell so low, but then the Frenchman never wholly loses his saving sense of the comic, nor the Frenchwoman her sense of value.

The British drama of this period shows clearly enough that "Woman" had become not an individual but an institution. Can one wonder that the public was bored by this reflection of its own ideas, and turned with relief from its native dramatic types to the living, if imperfect, heroines of the French stage? The Victorian theatre languished not of its own inanition, but because the life of the day gave it so little drama to reflect. Man had abandoned the sword for the steam-boiler, and the theatre does not easily learn to dramatize an engine. As for women, when the drama had glorified their virtues and condemned their vices there was nothing more to be said.

Gone was the learning of a Portia or the adventurousness of a Rosalind, gone even the tantrums of a Teazle. The needle alone remained and, unless used as a weapon, the needle lacks unexpectedness. No strong heroines descend to us from that bourgeois period, no originals, none who are mistresses of their destinies, only the clinging vine or the poison ivy types. In the age of Grace Darling, Florence Nightingale, and Josephine Butler our drama hardly gave us one heroic woman soul. These women were before their time, the extreme vanguard of a host to come, but the public did not know them as such, and the average dramatist, as I have said, does not fly ahead of his age.

In the 'sixties our theatre had not yet been inspired by the drama of industrialism, and had outgrown the drama of romance. The pleasing kitchen and parlour comedies of Tom Robertson could not long satisfy a public waiting for something big and vital. I have referred to the three great movements of to-day, labour, social service, and Feminism. The first two are only now creeping into the drama, being of more recent prominence, and less universal appeal, but the woman question was ripening all over northern Europe by the 'seventies, without having attained the popularity which would ensure it instant hearing in the theatre. The drama needed her Great Artist, him who could lead and not merely mirror the public

taste. He rose in answer to the world's need of him, and found a new and vital subject ready to his hand in Feminism.

"A Doll's House," by Henrik Ibsen, appeared in 1879. It had been preceded by "The Pillars of Society," which contained a strong note of Feminism, but "A Doll's House" was the real trumpet-blast. Whether Ibsen benefited the drama or the woman's movement more by his plays it would be difficult to decide. To the drama, among other precious boons, he gave realism in dialogue and construction; to the cause of women he gave one of its greatest inspirations. He has preached many lessons to women on many themes, but in "A Doll's House" he chanced to sum up what was perhaps in his day the very essence of Feminism. Individualism was to the women of the 'seventies what service is to those of to-day. Helmer and Nora expressed it in their great final scene.

Nora. What do you consider my holiest duties?
Helmer. Your duties to your husband and your children.
Nora. I have other duties equally sacred.
Helmer. Impossible! What duties do you mean?
Nora. My duties toward myself.
Helmer. Before all else you are a wife and a mother.
Nora. That I no longer believe. I believe that before all else I am a human being just as much

as you are—or at least that I should try to become one!

In this last sentence lies Ibsen's real challenge. The dramatic departure of Nora from her husband's house at the end of the play, which causes such endless argument, is of secondary importance. She may come home next day, or in a year, or never—one does not know. The real revolution is accomplished by her assertion that a woman has a human individuality apart from her sex functions. What uncounted generations of ridiculed and embittered "old maids" might have taken heart of grace at that message, had they only lived to hear it! Looking back over the enormous progress of the last thirty years, it is difficult for us to-day to realize how revolutionary that sentiment appeared, and still appears in certain lingering backwaters of the world. Only the other day came the utterance from some American village, voiced if I remember rightly by a divine, that women who had failed to marry should be deported, as useless encumbrances, to some equally useless island. This gentleman could not comprehend that a Jane Addams or a Julia Lathrop can save the lives of more children than a hundred women could give birth to. Such persons understand only physical maternity, not spiritual. To-day these gentry are anachronisms, but when "A Doll's House" appeared they would have expressed the average opinion.

I need not say that the plays of Ibsen obtained little hearing in America, and none in England, for some time. But they were seen and read by other dramatists, they were talked of, and became the inspiration for a new school of writers. They inaugurated the long list of Problem Plays which formed the staple output of the serious drama of the next generation.

The Problem Play, so called, dealt with only one problem, that of sex. Its most celebrated exemplars in England were of course Arthur W. Pinero and Henry Arthur Jones; Sudermann, Hauptmann, and a list of others too long to mention developed it on the Continent. The problem, stated with a hundred variations, was usually in essence the same—could a woman who had sinned against the accepted moral code rehabilitate herself? Could she, by marriage, as in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," by her art, as in "Magda," or by renunciation, as in "Mrs. Dane's Defence," be permitted to expiate the past? The answer was usually in the negative, but the gain was that the question should be raised at all. Here was a great advance in generosity from "Shall We Forgive Her," for in that melodrama the heroine had been a helpless victim, whereas in these plays her fault had been deliberate. Her partner in guilt continued naturally to go unscathed; one must not expect too much at once. The Problem Play shows the public

beginning to admit that a woman may have some virtue as a human being apart from her sex, that if she has failed in one department of life she may conceivably succeed in another. It endeavoured, in fact, to apply the forgotten principles of Christianity to this question. So far, so good.

The failure of this type of play from the feminist point of view lay in the fact that it continued to show women weak, the sport of circumstance. If they held up their heads at all it was only through the generosity of others. Having first morally committed suicide they were apt to commit it physically. Sir Arthur Pinero indeed has never divorced himself from this last expedient of the theatre; even in his recent play of "Mid-Channel" we find the heroine, cast off by husband and lover, taking refuge in death. For her if there is no man, and no reputation, there is no life. This play, written at so late a date, should serve to remind feminists that even the fundamental grant of woman's separate individuality has not yet been generally made. To the most famous English living dramatist she continues to remain an appendage of man, and one must admit that Sir Arthur's observation is only too accurate so far as a large class in England is concerned. Dramatists of this type write of the progress they see, but they see the last step rather than the next. Such plays were valuable without a doubt; they marked a lessening of the nine-

teenth century's terrible pharisaism toward women, but they are already antiquated. They remain in liberalism behind their great precursor, Ibsen.

Within the last ten years the attitude of the drama towards women, particularly in America, has undergone a complete change. The modern heroine is as different from the lady of the Problem as she was different from her cousin of the melodrama. There is unhappily no great dramatic writer to be to the present day what Ibsen was to the 'eighties, but there are some brilliant and many clever ones, and their plays are often as feminist as the most ardent devotee of the cause could desire. Of these the most widely influential Frenchman is Brieux, Belgium gives us the seer Maeterlinck, and the most brilliant British playwrights are an Irishman and a Scotchman—Bernard Shaw and Sir J. M. Barrie. America has no dramatists of equal eminence, but among those who are successfully interpreting the new spirit are a number of clever writers such as Rachel Crothers and Bayard Veiller. It is noteworthy that no important Englishman has yet championed Feminism in the drama, though the young Stanley Houghton might have been a worthy representative had he lived.

All these dramatists, and many others, voice the problems of Feminism with real courage and insight. The most undaunted is Brieux, who attacks the whole

group of moral questions with unsparing realism. The woman whose husband denies her a child, the horror of the shrinking wife whose alcoholic mate forces maternity upon her, the hideous results to the next generation of the dual standard, these and other terrible tragedies of women are thrust upon the unwilling public ear in such dramatic sermons as "Les Trois Filles de Monsieur Dupont," "Maternité," and "Les Avariés" (Damaged Goods).

Maeterlinck shows virtue and courage in their most exalted forms in "Monna Vanna," and gives an exquisite parable of the woman's movement in the escape of the imprisoned princesses in "Ardiane et Barbe Bleue." In the last act of this play, after their escape from the dungeon, all the wives elect to remain with their master, except Ardiane herself, who goes out into the sunlight alone. They have been too long imprisoned to be able to face the open reaches of the world; it is only she, the newcomer, who has the courage to stand in the sun. That is one aspect of the parable, but there is another which, if people could understand its truth, would go far to kill the popular prejudice against Feminism. While Blue Beard is a tyrant the women fear and seek to escape him, but when, wounded, he needs them, they cling to him, though the door to freedom stands open. When all paths are free to woman she will not forget man, her child and lover, but will walk beside instead

of behind him. How can he ever be so blind as to doubt it?

Sir J. M. Barrie's contribution to the woman's movement rests on a one-act play, "The Twelve Pound Look." The popular comedy "What Every Woman Knows" was almost a contribution to the opposition, for it showed the heroine using those indirect arts of which we are so weary. The feminist respects men, and herself, too much to desire to "twist them round her little finger" as does the woman in this play. "The Twelve Pound Look," however, is pure gold, and we owe Barrie sincere gratitude for it. A woman miserably married to a pompous egoist of wealth, learns to typewrite on a hired machine, and when she has earned the £12 to pay for her typewriter elopes with it to freedom. Years later she unwittingly returns to his house as a stenographer, to find a new wife yearning for a like escape. The comedy lies in the husband's incapacity to believe that his first wife finds freedom sweeter than luxury, and his chagrin at the discovery that his successful rival was merely work and liberty. This cheery stenographer is the new woman with a vengeance, who, economically independent, will accept no gift but at the hands of love, and who finds solace for disillusionment in work. Here is a change indeed from the suicidal lady of the Problem Play.

A vital phase of the moral problem was dramatized

by Stanley Houghton in "Hindle Wakes." A girl mill hand runs away for a week-end jaunt with her employer's son, who is engaged to a young woman of his own class. The horrified parents of both truants demand that the youth make retribution by marrying his partner in guilt. His fiancée, whom he really cares for, renounces him, and he is tearfully being forced into the lifelong penance of an uncongenial marriage, when the mill-girl flatly refuses to perform her share in the ceremony. She does not want to marry this young man, she informs their petrified relatives. He is a nice boy, but too spineless for her. They were equally to blame, but she sees no reason why life-long unhappiness should follow their act. Let the young man marry where he loves—she hopes some day to do the same. Meanwhile, "so long as there be mills i' Lancashire," she can make her own way.

What a gulf between this play and the "Shall We Forgive Her" type! In one the heroine refuses to kneel, though guilty; in the other she grovels, though morally innocent. In refusing the payment of a rich marriage for what was, however wrongly, a free gift on her part, the girl in "Hindle Wakes" lifts herself out of the bought-and-sold class just as did the heroine of "The Twelve Pound Look" when she escaped the humiliations of her luxurious slavery. The radicalism of "Hindle Wakes" is perhaps dangerous at

one point, if it seems to countenance what may be called the single standard of immorality—letting down the bars for the woman instead of raising them for the man. This criticism has been made of it with some fairness. But the moral gain is great over the hypocrisy and flaccidity of the old dramas. The question of the second chance, usually answered in the negative by the Problem Plays, was answered by Stanley Houghton with an unqualified affirmative. His heroine is faulty, but strong, instead of sinning and supine.

But it is the plays of Bernard Shaw that most consistently remind us of the new spirit in women. Like Ibsen, he makes his women strong, often stronger than men, and he makes them persons. They do a hundred things besides falling in love, from office-work to exploration, from leading the Salvation Army to assaulting the police. The exception is Ann, in "Man and Superman," who is the female reduced to her essentials. In order to prove the truism that the female needs the male more than he needs her, because of her racial task, Mr. Shaw makes Ann the huntress and Tanner the fleeing quarry. The truth is less dramatic. All males like to hunt, but the natural female has no need to do so—she is a magnet, and instead of pursuing, draws. But I should have no quarrel with Ann, who at least had the courage of her instincts, had she not been indirect. The femin-

ist could forgive her her hunting, but not her lying. I fear she was more minx than woman. But Ann apart, Shaw's women are a gallant lot, and one loves them for their maternal tolerance toward men. I think Mr. Shaw sees women as mothers and workers rather than as mates. If so, there is warrant for the view in the England of to-day. Englishwomen, not being allowed to be men's equals, have to fall back upon being their superiors or inferiors. They can take care of men, or use them for their purposes, but they find it difficult to confide in them, for confidence means friendship, and friendship means equality. Without friendship, obviously, there can be no true mating.

In America the dramatist most inevitably reflects the woman's movement, for in America it is most triumphant. In New York within the last few years dozens of plays have been produced dealing with the moral, economic, and political problems of women. Though most of these would not bear discussion as works of art, their value lies in the fact that they prove the existence of a wave of public interest in such questions. It is instructive to note that the great supporters of the theatre in America are women, who, we are told by reactionaries, are in the mass indifferent to Feminism. Yet the astute theatrical manager, with his eyes fixed on the box office receipts, and his ears open for the comments of his women patrons,

continues to serve them increasing doses of such fare.

Brieux's "Damaged Goods" played for two seasons in New York to houses packed with women. A crudely written but fine little play called "Kindling," depicting the revolt of a slum mother against society, was killed by the critics in New York, but has played for seasons to enthusiastic audiences throughout the country. Bayard Veiller's "Within the Law," which is a sermon in melodramatic form on the necessity of a living wage for shop girls, and the barbarities of our penal system, is a record money-maker. Another of his plays shows the heroine running for the office of Mayor in a western town against a gang of crooked politicians. A recent play showed a deserted wife, who twenty years ago would have starved or drowned herself, mending her broken heart with a successful chicken-farm. But the "white slave" play has perished of over-work. Managers mistook their public there. Women will patronize a serious attempt to discuss this most deadly problem, but they revolt from offensive shoddy.

Everywhere the business woman is prime favourite. In drama or farce the all-knowing stenographer, or sleuth-like telephone operator, caps the climax of successful machination. Even Peg-o'-My-Heart, the uneducated Irish girl in her teens, instructs her worldly elders in the art of life. One wonders if the

pendulum has not swung too far and if there are no inefficient women left in America. It is obvious at least that the contemporary New York audience prefers to see its heroine armed with a dictograph rather than a smelling bottle.

In the plays of Rachel Crothers we find the most deliberate attempt to interpret the modern woman's point of view. Her girls are almost always self-supporting, and her women are intensely loyal to their sex and to their moral code. In "The Three of Us" the girl placed in a compromising position refuses an explanation which would involve others, and renews her lover's faith by her courage instead of her tears. In "A Man's World" the heroine, a successful writer, repudiates the man she loves rather than accept his code of the dual standard, with its irreparable injury to other women. In "Ourselves" the wife leaves her husband for the same reason, while his sister stands by the victim of his amour. Perhaps the air Miss Crothers' heroines breathe is too rare for the average woman, but her characters serve to express the growing solidarity of women, and their mounting indignation at certain evils. Such plays are even more valuable as evidence than as art, and it is from the former point of view that I am discussing them. There are several other successful women playwrights in America, but they strike a less distinctive note than Miss Crothers.

Miss Cicely Hamilton and other able women have

written successfully for the stage in England, but they have contributed nothing essentially different from the American output to which I have referred, except in the case of Miss Emily Baker, a typewriter in the city of London, whose play of middle-class suburban life, "Chains," is in my opinion very important. When this little tragedy was produced in New York the managerial mind could not forego a happy ending, and, the entire point of the play being sacrificed, it was voted dull and duly failed. Produced as written, in a "théâtre intime," it could hardly fail to interest. It differs from other feminist plays by showing the suffering caused by the old régime, not to the woman, but to the man. A strong active youth, cut out for the open air life of farming, is seen tied to a bank-clerk's stool by his obligation to support his wife. His heart is being killed by the life, but when the chance to emigrate and find the work he loves offers itself, his wife tells him of her approaching maternity, and he settles down in his petty harness for ever. Had the woman had a spark of the new courage or resourcefulness, or the new pride, he could have had his chance and she could have followed him to a wider life—but she was only a dear little thing, educated to cling. The implications in this play would not have been made even a dozen years ago. To-day, when the ambitions of thousands of men are being crushed by the dead weight of their family's "gentility," women, remembering their own struggles against the closed doors of opportunity, know how to sympathize.

Such are the reflections in the mirror of the contemporary drama. He that hath eyes let him see.

One could not leave the world of the theatre, without referring to its development as a calling for women. The time has passed when the actress was considered unsexed or even declassed. The legitimate stage has become an honourable field for women's ambition and is being utilized by an ever improving class. The principle of equal pay for equal work is largely established in the theatre, and an actress's position among her confrères is determined not by her sex but by her ability. The social recognition of the actress is not so complete in America as in Europe, but this is because of the standing of the art itself, and applies equally to actors. Even in the hazardous task of theatrical management women are increasingly successful. Aside from the perennial example of Madame Bernhardt, one can name among many Miss Ashwell and Miss McCarthy in England, and Miss Elliott, Miss Anglin, Miss Russell and Miss Nethersole in America. The chief patrons of the drama are women; so are many of its most famous exponents, while women playwrights are continually more successful. A woman gained Stratford's recent prize for a blank verse drama, and a woman's play has just won Mr. Ames's open competition in New York. Not only the subjects of our drama but its writers and players show the trend of the time.

CHAPTER VIII

COLUMBINE AND CLOWN

In considering the various lights cast upon the position of women by the contemporary arts one should, I think, include the art of entertaining in its lighter forms. Having devoted a chapter to the drama, I must not omit the evidence of her rival the "show." The circus is the father of all "shows," and the circus recurringly disproves one superstition in regard to women. I have already said that courage is not a sex quality, but I need not point out how commonly the opposite view is held. Yet there is no feat of nerve and skill performed by male acrobats in the circus that is not also performed by women. Where stout hearts, sure eyes, and quick feet and hands are required men and women work together. Diving from the roof of the hall, looping the loop, slack and tight rope walking, trick riding, and flying trapeze work are done indifferently by either sex. Yet in view of such hair-raising acts many persons still assert that women lack nerve, and place no confidence, for instance, in their work as surgeons. The circus, for which boys and girls are trained together, proves

that courage and nerve, like almost every other human quality, are not sexual but are individual traits, developed or retarded by environment.

The bodily freedom and grace of the circus acrobat have always been familiar to us, but the bare-foot or "classic" dancing of the last decade has given the public quite a new light upon the physical capacities of women. Originated by Miss Isadora Duncan, an artist of the first rank, this beautiful dancing has spread to every centre of the world, and has made us ashamed of the desuetude into which the muscles and nerves of half the race have fallen. It opens our eyes too—if we so permit it—to the ugliness of our ideas of beauty, the small waist, mincing carriage and misshapen feet which together or in turn have afflicted us so long. It reminds us of the glory that was Greece; it reminds us too of the physical training of the Spartan women which made their sons invincible. I believe very strongly that the entire woman's movement would ultimately fail unless it were based on physical strength, and that though women have done very much to develop themselves in the last two generations they have not yet done nearly enough. This is particularly the case in America, where the average girl is brought up much too softly, and with considerable artificiality. I wish that the Greek dancing could be a part of the training of little girls in every school in the country. Young women are

being prepared for maternity now-a-days by being taught the care of infants after birth, but they are not being prepared, as a runner for the race, for the great ordeal which will enable them successfully to give birth. Classic dancing, like a noble statue or painting, is an inspiration toward that physical perfection women should strive for in their daughters. Its buoyant freedom breathes the spirit of the new age.

As for the popular stage and drawing-room dancing of the day, about which such endless controversies rage, I do not think it denotes anything whatever except that the dance is one of the most fundamental impulses of joy, and that if an impulse is suppressed in one form it will break out in another. There is nothing new about the objection to dancing. The over-nice have always been ready to chide the gaiety of others, seeming to find something unhallowed in the expression of joy. In the polite pages of Addison's "Spectator" we find a father proclaiming the viciousness of the "new dances," and a couple of generations ago an emperor forbade the shelter of his court to the all-conquering waltz. Every pleasure is capable of abuse, but in the main these dances are a much healthier sign than the bridge-drives they have largely superseded in one class or the street-loitering in another.

The favourite "shows" of the modern city, after

the ubiquitous moving-pictures, are found in the music halls, or, as we say in America, the vaudeville houses. Just as women support the playhouse, men support the halls, and it is in them that we find the masculine sense of humour least guardedly expressed. The "broad" joke is still common, but a generation ago it was so much broader, and so much commoner, that in England gentlewomen could not possibly attend a music hall. Vaudeville in America is a more recent institution, and began with a cleaner slate. It usually professes to cater to the family, but it remains essentially a masculine entertainment. Here is the home of the great mother-in-law joke, the famous divorce joke, and the delicious humour of the hen-pecked husband. Why these tragedies of sex so inevitably stimulate the risibility of men is one of those things women sometimes ponder. Indeed, why sex at all should be a subject for mirth is seldom clear to them; they are inclined to think the Earth-Mother must be offended at the laughter that greets her mystic laws—but then they, like her, are women. These jokes, however, can we but see it, are evidences of a truth which anti-feminists will do well to face. They prove that to men at least, however they may sentimentalize to us, love and marriage have been neither sacred nor satisfying. This is self-evident, for we do not joke about sacred things. Love has represented to men at once the nicest and the naught-

iest of themes; marriage has called forth their deepest romance, but also their keenest disillusionment. Are those who would have us turn back the clock content that this is so? When we are asked to go back to our grandmother's days—the days when men crowded to entertainments no decent woman could witness—are we to understand our opponents are so satisfied with the old ways? Has the estimation in which women have been held throughout history been so high that any change is for the worse? Have the things most sacred to women been equally sacred to men, and is this why any change in the status or powers of woman is to be deplored? Compare the humour of the music hall two generations ago with the output of jokes to-day, and the answer becomes clear. There is no place of entertainment in England or America to-day, in this era of conscious womanhood, that dare cheapen her sex as the old halls of fifty years ago, in the days of Victorian sentiment, cheapened it. An instinctive example of this change is found in the vaudeville career of the "suffragette." For years comedians used the suffrage agitation as a stock joke. A gigantic man in petticoats and wig, labelled "Votes for Women," never failed to raise a roar, coupled with the appearance of a neglected infant and a hungry husband. An enormous class of women and a great cause were being held up to ridicule to the applause of the public. Recently, however, the popular attitude

toward this reform has so completely changed, that the managers of America's largest chain of vaudeville houses have suppressed all offensive allusion to it. As on this subject, so on every other that concerns women, the tone of public humour is infinitely higher than it used to be, for the reason that as women learn to value themselves more, they are more valued by men. Every step in economic and political position gained by women means a step away from the mixture of sentimentality and contempt which has been the attitude of the majority of men toward them.

Drama has become more intelligent in regard to women, and vaudeville more decent, but in musical comedy we find symbolized all the anti-social forces that prey upon our sex. I have too much friendliness toward men not to feel regret that modern musical comedy, that blot upon the great arts of music and the drama, is devised and maintained by and for the male sex. Anti-feminist leaders should be given permanent boxes for these entertainments by the grateful managers, for they are forcing-houses for every growth that feminists are seeking to destroy, and they foster every instinct of sex-consciousness and false sentiment which is helpful to the spread of anti-feminist propaganda.

There is hardly a vice founded on the subjection of women that this class of entertainment does not develop. The whole fabric is based upon that arti-

ficial sex stimulation which is at the root of the greatest evils of modern city life. The under-payment of the chorus makes some form of subsidy a necessity for its members, while the male audience provides the temptation of "the easiest way." The costumes combine a maximum of extravagance with a minimum of suggestive covering. The story is a combination of cheap sentiment and cheaper naughtiness. The appearance in the typical Broadway musical comedy of good music, singing, or acting is unusual, the comedians and dancers generally supplying the only able performances. The public is given poor value for its money in everything but pretty forms and faces, and these are supposed to compensate it for the absence of melody, plot, or wit. Everything that should be most sacred and beautiful in life is cheapened by these entertainments, which are voted decent only because they are light. No serious drama would escape the danger of police interference if it dealt with the topics giggled over in these "comedies." Worthy people are very busy deploring the decadence of popular entertainments. It is fashionable to blame women for all the ills of society, and there are not wanting persons who find a connection between these ills and the preoccupation of thousands of women with the feminist movement. The truth is that in the growth of Feminism lies the greatest hope for the ultimate disappearance of such

performances. By as much as women gain in the mental and moral stature that comes with education, independence, and responsibility will men really admire and esteem them and desire to be worthy of their love. By as much as men desire this will they be drawn away from those things which cheapen women. The pitiful spectacle of rows of youths ogling a chorus clothed not for beauty but to accentuate the suggestion of undress, would be impossible in a society which did not lower all women by setting aside a portion of them for the pleasures of its men. The adequate education and economic independence of women will make such setting aside increasingly difficult.

Fortunately no attempt to cater to the lower part of human nature ever permanently succeeds. The aspirations of men as a class are so much higher than some among them seem to grasp. Musical comedy managers have already over-reached themselves, and there are indications that the tide has now turned in favour of legitimate comic opera, which is an entirely different class of entertainment. Meanwhile, let any student of human nature, desiring to obtain a composite portrait of an anti-feminist, study the faces of the audience at a Broadway musical comedy of the older type, and he has his information.

CHAPTER IX

FICTION AND FEMINISM

It is possible that without the novel the woman's movement might not yet have reached its present growth. Fiction, being at once the most flexible and popular of the arts, is inevitably the favourite vehicle of expression for propagandists with a leaning toward art, or artists with a bent toward propaganda. Moreover, even if the novelist rides no hobbies and is content merely to record life as he sees it, he must still, like the dramatist, appeal to a wide public in order to live. His subject-matter must be human, he must deal always with men and women, largely with sex and the problems of sex, if he is to have an extended hearing. But writers know that too clear a vision may be dangerous to popularity. The novelist who tells the public what he thinks it should know is seldom so successful as he who tells it only what it wishes to hear, for his readers would always rather have their sentiments confirmed than their knowledge enhanced. Therefore, fiction writers may be roughly divided into two groups, those who use narrative as a medium for ideas and those who subordinate their

convictions to the demands of an attractive story. Writers of the first type are often important and sometimes popular, those of the second are usually popular and seldom important. Occasionally comes a writer of genius who has no need to preach, because he can illumine, who can win attention by the brilliance of his manner, and hold it through the truth of his matter.

Glancing over the fiction of our time in its relation to the woman's movement, we can see how the popular novelist, like the dramatist, has been content to draw a conventional portrait of the lives and characters of women; and how the writer conscious of a mission has often run counter both to the conventional and the truest view in order to demonstrate his particular theory. Finally we see the occasional writer of genius aiding the progress of women, by forcing the revelation of their true natures and needs upon a world only too willingly misled by sentiment on the one hand or bigotry on the other. Genius is compounded of the qualities of both the sexes, so that a great artist, of whatever kind, is likely to have understanding and sympathy for the sex opposite to his own. Rembrandt or Raphael, Shakespeare or Euripides, Balzac or Meredith, can and do depict the traits of either sex with equal truth and impartiality. But a novelist may be a great genius yet lack this dual vision of the supreme artist.

A typical instance appears in the writings of Dickens, who as signally failed with his women as with his heroes. He was like the character actor, who can play angels, demons, witches, misers, or saints—anyone in fact except a plain human being. Dickens, with all his splendid pity for the poor, for children, and for the aged, never seemed to perceive the problems of women, which were growing into articulate demands even as he wrote. Indeed, he contemptuously dismissed the claims of the new woman in his sketch of the neglectful mother, Mrs. Jellyby, "with her glorious eyes fixed on Africa."

Nor did woman fare better at the hands of Dickens' great rival, Thackeray. Beautiful and frail, virtuous and insipid, cattish and clever, Thackeray's conventional types of womanhood never progressed beyond the most approved patterns of mid-Victorianism. Of the giants of that era only one male novelist drew women of real flesh and blood. But before Meredith, the great champion of women, came Charlotte Brontë, creating the first wholly realistic heroines of English fiction.

Whatever may be the difference of opinion about Charlotte Brontë's plots or style, there can be none concerning her service to women. Without half the charm of Jane Austen, she accomplished what that sprightly damsel never even attempted, the creation of a heroine whose salient characteristic was neither

beauty nor virtue, but sheer force of character. Jane Eyre was both loving and passionate, but neither her tenderness nor her passion could overwhelm her will. She was small, physically weak, and plain, but her self-reliance was complete, her moral courage impregnable. She was the first British heroine to stand entirely outside the clinging vine category; she was, in spirit at least, the precursor of the modern militant. That Charlotte Brontë was aware of the tour de force involved in obtaining recognition for a plain-faced heroine is shown by the fact that she deliberately undertook the feat as a kind of "dare." Both she and her sister Emily drew women with the veneer stripped off. Passionate, intense and sincere, their heroines, for all their puritanism, reflected something of the naked quality of the moors where they were created.

George Eliot, perhaps the greatest English psychological novelist, left the cause of her sex where she found it. Her problems were not those of environment or opportunity, but those of character. In her sad and stoic philosophy there was no room for that flame of gallant optimism which was needed to illumine the conventional estimation of women. The candle lighted by Charlotte Brontë flickered alone, until it became a torch in the hands of Meredith.

George Meredith was to fiction what Ibsen was to drama, the prophet of Feminism. Not that he would

necessarily have accepted the phrase in its modern application. But when he wrote, one thing above all others was needed by women—courage, and the recognition of their possession of it. The right to be themselves, the right to stand alone, to be great-hearted, to face life fearlessly, these attributes of courage Meredith's heroines possessed in full measure. In granting them to women Meredith rendered the sex a service so vital and so new to his day, as to place himself by this act of recognition alone among the pioneers of Feminism.

Unhappily for women, Meredith belonged to that class of artist whose appeal is too intellectual to be general. Complexity of style barred his work from the many as it did Browning's. Both these writers held women greatly, both became a cult to ardent followers, both failed to override the eccentricities of their method sufficiently to reach beyond the few to the larger public which so sadly needed their guidance. It is singular that the people's poet, Tennyson, had little more to give women than had the people's novelist, Dickens. The Princess is certainly an advance on Mrs. Jellyby, but she is after all only strong while there is no Prince to make her weak; she is at best only a beautiful poseuse. These popular writers lost nothing of their popularity by reason of their stereotyped Doras and Elaines, little Emilies and Guineveres, while the Carinthias and Pompilias of

Meredith and Browning are only in our own day fully appreciated.

During the years of England's first organized uprising of women, the era of the first suffrage agitation and the campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts, one novelist only, Sarah Grand, used her pen deliberately on behalf of the cause. Her novels were barred from the family bookshelves, and she herself endured much persecution, but she called the attention of the public to the horrors of state regulation of vice, and was the first writer to draw a sympathetic portrait of the new type of woman, the earnest and fearless moral crusader of the 'sixties and 'seventies. But for her work the outside public would have been even more blind than it was to the real nature of these women. Sarah Grand is the prototype of the influential school of feminist women novelists which exists to-day, but at the time she wrote her subjects were too unpopular to find other exponents.

The problems of the "new woman" were not alluring, but those of the "society" woman were, and synchronizing with the rise of the Problem Play in England came a corresponding stream of problem novels dealing with the temperament of this lady. The earlier work of Robert Hichens is typical in England, and latterly such popular fiction as that of Graham Phillips in America. Deserting the ingenue heroine of Victorian tradition in favour of the married

woman, and possessing a latitude necessarily denied the theatre, the problem novelists produced a flood of semi-erotic fiction designed to lay bare the inmost heart of Woman, and to uncover the "rake" who (according to the poet of another day) there lay concealed. These writers, bent on showing up by means of a "succès de scandale" the foibles of society women, succeeded in creating a conventional type of parasite, a daughter of the horse-leech, as extreme in her over-sexualization as the Dickensonian ingenue in her imbecility. The popular novelist, having outlived the romantic revival during which women fell into the angel or devil class, developed them into the equally mythical basilisk or sphinx type. The successful novels of that decade, which has been called the "naughty 'nineties," were on the whole more artificial than the plays, possibly because the sturdy sense of the pit and gallery theatre patrons were not represented in the reading public of "society" fiction.

The development of the "society" novel, which gained distinction through the brilliancy of the meteoric John Oliver Hobbes, is perhaps most widely known through the writings of two other women, Mrs. Humphry Ward in England and Edith Wharton in America. The former gives us the very best of the anti-feminist type of woman. "Lady Rose's Daughter," one of her ablest books, is typical. Here we have a heroine, unmarried it is true, but

placed through circumstances somewhat in the position of the eighteenth century mistresses of the salon. This woman is brilliant, attractive, and successful, but she is incapable of independence or direct action. Her only medium of expression lies in the (to her) plastic minds and hearts of men, upon which she works so successfully as to place herself in the inner ring of diplomatic life, and ultimately to win a duchess's coronet. Lady Rose is the apotheosis of the parasite class. With all her charm and ability she remains the product of a slave-status, the typical expression of a passing order.

Edith Wharton, the most brilliant living American novelist, seems like Mrs. Ward to remain little touched by the ever-widening circle of feminist ideals. Her masterpiece "Ethan Frome," which might be compared in strength and terror to Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights," is a study of primitive New England life which stands in subject and treatment quite outside her other work. This novel and "The Valley of Decision" apart, her books are mainly devoted to a somewhat pitiless study of the class of woman already exploited to weariness by a host of lesser writers. The ineffective parasite confronts us in "The House of Mirth," the heartless blood-sucker in "The Custom of the Country." These types are a product of the artificial status of women which Feminism is seeking to destroy, but

they are at worst only representative of a small class, and seem to have attracted to themselves more obloquy than their numbers or demerits deserve. It is clear at least that nothing new can be said either of their sins of omission or commission, and one regrets that a writer of Mrs. Wharton's great ability can find no more important subjects for her masterly powers of analysis.

The most noteworthy novels of to-day differ essentially from the sophisticated "society" school of the 'nineties from which Mrs. Wharton's work in reality derives. The present generation of writers, both on the continent and in England, is conspicuous for a gravity of purpose, a passionate social sense, and a democratic width of vision absent from the work of their immediate predecessors. We are now in the full tide of the propagandist novel—naturalist, socialist, feminist, or primitivist. We are being invited to mend roads, become tramps, succour animals, put down white slavery, or hasten the social revolution, by a host of writers many of whom place the symmetry of their art altogether second to the promulgation of their theories. The enormous popularity of Arnold Bennett is perhaps partly due to his refusal to be lured from his post of impartial observer into the ranks of these exhorters. The public escapes with relief from so much urging to the quiet of his robust and genial commonplaces. Not that one deplores the theorists.

They are the inevitable outcome of the modern will to serve, and express a healthy revulsion from superficiality of subject. Among them feminist writers hold high place. France, so long backward in the Feminism she originally created, leads the world today in the production of pro- and anti-feminist novels, and few seriously considered English and American writers fail to touch one aspect or another of the woman's problem. Like his master Balzac, Bennett, the observer, makes an important, if passive, contribution to the popular estimate of women by his illumination of commonplace types. His heroines are not institutions but individuals, not pegs on which to hang a theory, but plain human beings, and interesting by reason of their humanity.

Of English writers who contribute something more positive, the most important are John Galsworthy and H. G. Wells. The first is an artist who is a reformer by reason of his heart, the second a reformer whose brain has urged him into literature. Galsworthy seems to see women as the beautiful and gracious victims of our social order, and grieves over them with the same tenderness he exhibits towards England's wild things, wounded by her sporting rifles. Wells, while proclaiming himself an ardent feminist, appears to have some doubt whether society is not rather more the victim of women than conversely.

The most beautiful woman character in the novels

of Galsworthy is undoubtedly Mrs. Pendyce, the gracious gentlewoman and deep-hearted mother of "A Country House." In addition to her beauty of character, she has strength, for she is ready to take the supreme step of leaving her husband rather than condone his threatened abandonment of their son. But Galsworthy's other heroines seem to be completely the victims of British law and custom, and of the all-conquering egotism of the British male. The value of his novels to feminists is that they show up these laws and customs, and this egotism, in their true colours. To Galsworthy there is no righteousness in an order that penalizes women, as there was, for instance, to the dramatist Henry Arthur Jones. He deeply pities women, and he is a modernist because in his pity there is no condescension.

Wells is the only contemporary English novelist who attacks the woman question with studied earnestness and sincerity, but after a careful reading of his books one can only conclude that he is too hampered by his sex to be able to solve it. There seems to be some tough fibre in the instinct of the pure Englishman that resists the assaults of Feminism, even when the defences of his reason have fallen. Meredith was Irish and Welsh—to the Celtic and Gaelic origin of our feminist playwrights I have already referred. The socialism of Wells insures a theoretic adherence to feminist principles, between which and his emotions

a continual struggle seems to be in progress. The result is that feminists take up his novels with ever renewed hopefulness only to lay them down with recurring disappointment. Four of his books deal particularly with women: "Ann Veronica," "The New Machiavelli," "Marriage" and "The Passionate Friends." Of these, the plots of three revolve about experiments in free love; while the fourth, "Marriage," is a love story complicated by the economic dependence of the wife. Moreover, two of the four are autobiographies of men, so that the problem is shown only from one side. In "The New Machiavelli" the hero's love costs him his world, in "Marriage" it costs him his ambition, and in "The Passionate Friends" his life's happiness, while in addition to the woes of the heroines the feelings of two innocent wives are sacrificed completely. Wells's problems of love and marriage are bravely and ably stated, but no solution is found, or even indicated. And it is instructive that when, for the first time, women have opened the door to every avenue of life, this avowed champion of theirs should still find himself wholly preoccupied with their emotional existence. The one woman in these books who is giving her life to something other than emotion—Mrs. Bailey in "The New Machiavelli"—is drawn with marked lack of sympathy, and the chorus of suffragists appearing here and there through the books with intolerance. The

complication in "Marriage" is caused by the failure of the wife to relieve the economic pressure on the husband, though the means were ready to her hand in the shape of her talent for interior decoration. The disaster in "The Passionate Friends" is again brought about by the heroine, who deliberately sells herself to one man while loving another. Summarized thus without their method of treatment, these plots sound like nothing better than the old "nasty" novel of the 'nineties, but in truth they are something more. Mr. Wells does perceive the problems of women; he does try to state them fairly. But he seems to be too preoccupied with one of them to be able squarely to envisage the others. He is engrossed, that is to say, in the single aspect of woman's problem which he, as a man, directly shares with her; he seems unable to divest himself of his sex-consciousness sufficiently to view her with detached eyes. He has honestly tried to write as a feminist; he has done as well as any Englishman of his generation; but his efforts do not satisfy us.

In a different category altogether is the group of novelists I have called primitivists, headed by Maurice Hewlett. To them passion is completely its own justification. They know no morality save love, and no fit setting for love save primitive nature. We have in America no hot Italianate painter of love such as Hewlett, but we have a host of fiction writers whose heroes find themselves, their souls, and their mates

amid western deserts, northern lakes, or frozen pine-forests. Such stories represent a natural reaction from the hot-house type of novel. Romantic and unrealistic though they are, they deserve mention because they supply us with a new heroine, the woman of physical strength and courage, who shoots rapids, bears, or bad men with equal coolness; swims, rides, nurses the hero, or elopes with him with equal self-assurance. With all the romantic exaggerations entailed, we may be thankful for this heroine, who is not a mistress, but a mate, not a doll, but a woman.

To set against her we have had in recent popular American fiction a sad declension to the hot-house demi-vierge heroine. A product of Broadway, and of commercialized magazine literature, these heroines are to fiction what the musical comedy chorus is to drama. At least three novelists of talent, Robert Chambers, Owen Johnson, and the at one time brilliant Gouverneur Morris, are writing up the poor little Broadway and Fifth Avenue moth with the same exaggerated concern which, a few years back, was bestowed upon her sister of Park Lane. These heroines are often taken as horrid examples of the results of freedom for women. They are in reality merely timely illustrations of the extent to which false ideas of life and beauty, fostered by a host of commercial agencies, are retarding women's otherwise rapid advance.

Fiction is the one art, outside of acting, in which

women have begun to hold their own with men. It is of all the arts perhaps the best adapted to their special capacities and habits of life. One naturally expects therefore to find the ideals of Feminism best expressed through the writings of women, nor is one's expectation disappointed. In the work of all the male novelists of whom I have spoken the one preoccupation in regard to women is with their sex—their reactions to love, marriage, or maternity. It is not until we turn to the work of women novelists that we see the lives of modern women drawn in the round, with the sex-life occupying only its fair share of the whole. Not that all women writers are true to the newer ideals. Mrs. Wharton and Mrs. Ward stand at the head of a number of such, who share their conventionality without their ability. We are continually afflicted with the wayward girl who finds her soul by having a baby, or discovers the hollowness of honest ambition when she falls in love. Saccharine sentimentality is still common in the work of women, but it is now fortified by more robust fare, and the truest things written to-day of women are expressed by their own sex. Elizabeth Robins, Mary Johnston, and Gertrude Atherton have written frankly propagandist novels for Feminism, embracing its economic, political, and moral aspects. Ellen Glasgow, in her recent novel, "Virginia," performed the double office of interring the old-fashioned heroine and tenderly strewing her

grave with flowers. Inez Haynes Gillmore has contributed an allegory of the whole problem of women in her romance "Angel Island," while Charlotte Perkins Gilman has recently turned to fiction as a vehicle for the exposition of her doctrines. Nor has the feminist output of women been merely didactic. In magazine fiction one of the most triumphantly successful characters of the last few years has been Edna Ferber's Emma McChesney, an individual combining every womanly virtue and charm with a successful career as a commercial traveller. A recent favourite, Marjorie Benton Cooke's "Bambi," is at once a phenomenally successful writer and an utterly irresistible woman. These magazine stories are of greater importance as indications of the changing view of women than are the more serious novels written for a limited class. The question as to whether women may enjoy both the life of love and of work, put as a challenge by anti-feminists, and still replied to by most writers with a hesitating "no," is being answered by these young American women with a gallant affirmative. That such heroines, workers and women both, should have been popularized by women writers, is as hopeful a sign of the progress of Feminism as one could well desire.

CHAPTER X

THE ART OF ADORNMENT

WHETHER or not manners make the man, there can be no question that to a large extent clothes make the woman. During the long years of her subjection all mediums of artistic expression were denied woman except one—her own body and its immediate setting. The arts were closed to her; music, sculpture, painting, even for a long time acting, could not be practised professionally as ends in themselves, but only as added means to personal attractiveness. They were subordinated to adornment, which was woman's one legitimate art, and—since she must live by pleasing—one of her prime necessities. The dress of women, therefore, and the quality of their immediate surroundings, symbolize their position in all ages. The more enslaved or parasitic they are the more exaggerated their adornment becomes, while as they gain in freedom their accoutrements gain in sanity. Moreover, dress is used by women, as it is by men, as a mark of class or badge of servitude; but while the servitude is woman's own, the class is that of her master. A servant's dress is in reality more dignified than that of a duchess, for it is a symbol of economic

independence, while the duchess's robes are as much signs of ownership as the slave's anklets.

The upward wave of women's endeavours, reflected in contemporary drama and literature, is also to be seen in sartorial art; but the sinister backwash towards frivolity, extravagance and irresponsibility of which plays and novels give evidence, reaches its lowest depth in women's dress. Indeed, so far have the vagaries of this art been carried that it is difficult to say whether they are more truly the cause or the effect of the qualities they symbolize.

Let us take the present skirt as an illustration. It is full at the hips and tight below the knees—that is, it is strongly sex-differentiated. Walking in it is an art to be acquired after some practice. The naturally free walk is curtailed to a limping lisp, in which helplessness and artificiality are developed to the *n*th power. Being unnatural, the walk is obviously self-conscious, and the transition from self-consciousness to sex-consciousness is short indeed. I doubt if one can touch pitch without being defiled more readily than one can habitually wear a hobble skirt without being belittled. It is useless to blame the home for this, that sacrosanct institution which is popularly held responsible for all our joys and all our ills. Mothers who were themselves brought up in false ideals cannot be expected to teach their daughters true ones. One must look to outside agencies for the cause of these vagaries, so contrary to the finest spirit of women.

The task of clothing women has become a world-wide business, chiefly organized by men, and run for the sole aim of profit. Banking on the young woman's normal instinct for admiration, and the man's desire for continual restimulation, these great trades employ every device of display and advertising to insure the maximum of extravagance in fashion. Every shop window, every theatre, every magazine and newspaper, every hoarding and street-car advertisement adds to the sensual and frivolous appeal. Artists of average or even eminent ability are forced by economic pressure to contribute their talents to the upbuilding of an artificial standard of taste. Seeing these designs, young people learn to wish to resemble them. Clothed in these unnatural fallals, girls adapt themselves, first physically and then spiritually, to their envelopes.

Young girls, though pleasure loving like all youth, are not naturally frivolous, nor vainer than boys. Two-inch heels and two-feet-wide skirts are not instinctive with the female sex, nor would young men admire women less if fashion decreed sandals and a kilt. It is as foolish to blame individual women for these things as individual men for the absurdity of starched linen and top-hats. The persons of either sex who dare brave custom are rare indeed, and their reward is usually martyrdom. The mass, sheep-like, will follow the leaders, and the leaders are no longer social, but commercial. Thousands of women realize these facts, but find it increasingly difficult for busi-

ness or personal reasons to put themselves at the disadvantage of appearing sparrow-like amid a flight of parrots. Moreover, the hand of organized commercialism makes it yearly more difficult for people of small means to obtain clothing made to order, particularly in America. A beginning has been made. In Germany the feminists have organized a chain of dressmaking firms which turn out gowns at once beautiful and sensible, and there is such a shop in London which is highly successful. These firms are owned and run by women; and indeed we must expect no help from men in this matter—the task is ours to shoulder as part of the physical and economic freeing of our sex.

For though commercialism, exploiting woman's natural desire for admiration, is the immediate cause of her fantastic dress, this exploitation would never have been possible without the underlying fact of woman's dependence. The skirt itself, worn in the middle ages by both sexes as a sign of rank, but retained by women as a mark of sex and a symbol of helplessness, would never have been submitted to by any class of beings who had the right to bodily freedom. Unsanitary, uncomfortable, and potentially suggestive, the outdoor skirt, even more than the useless and over-decorated hat, is probably a greater handicap to numberless women to-day than any of the so-called physical disadvantages of their sex. All the age-long superstitions about women, all the falsely chivalrous theories of their helplessness, all their

enforced idleness and dependence, are advertised with a vicious insistence by their fashionable clothing, and by the frenzy of gilt furniture, bric-a-brac, lap-dogs, lace covers and silken hangings with which the fashionable among them are surrounded. That the surfeit of these decorations often defeats its own object and dims the attractiveness of women by subordinating them to their setting—like a small painting in an over-elaborate frame—is immaterial to their exploiters and usually unperceived by themselves. Adornment, which should be an art, is in danger of becoming an orgy in which both art and patron will be submerged.

Fortunately for the health and sanity of the race, women, more backward in this than in other aspects of freedom, have yet made progress. Amid the bewildering display of fashion one is apt to overlook the steady gain in comfort and convenience made in the clothing of the majority of women. No feminist would quarrel with the doctrine that it is the duty of women (and of men, too, for that matter) to look their best. But clothes must be reasonable before they are beautiful, and this they have already begun to be.

The coat and skirt, called in America the suit, was to women's bodies what education was to their minds; it unlocked the door of freedom. The deletion of petticoats, the introduction of sweaters and short be-knickerbockered out-door skirts, opened the door, and with the expansion of the corset to normal waist measurements women (literally) breathed their

first breath of free air. Catherine de Médicis is said to have introduced the corset. If she is now suffering pains by reason of the massacre of St. Bartholomew and other sins, they must be slight indeed beside her punishment for this prime offence against the race. We have paid with over three hundred years of physical retardation for her caprice. However, the end appears to be in sight. The corset, though it has travelled down over the hips, has mercifully also dropped below the outraged lungs and heart. Beginning in iron it has ended in wired cotton; from a danger it has degenerated into a mere discomfort, sometimes not even that.

It is possible to-day for a busy woman to be comfortable without being conspicuous. Her clothes can be loose and light, her hats can fit her head, and she can even, with trouble, obtain low-heeled shoes. Moreover, she can wear breeches for riding, a skirtless dress for swimming, and even (if she be bold enough) a divided skirt for dancing. The shirt-waist was her first step to freedom,—he would be a bold prophet who should undertake to foretell her last.

The appurtenances, too, of the modern woman, while exhibiting on the one hand the acme of extravagance, show on the other a rapid increase in sanity and beauty. The art of furnishing has been reborn after its terrible Victorian lapse. There is often a dignity and simplicity in the modern house which reflects the mental growth of its mistress. Decorations have meaning, beauty and individuality where they have

not succumbed to slavish imitation and excess. In fact, from this art of adornment, whether of the person or the home, feminist observers may derive at once the greatest satisfaction and the deepest discouragement. It is here, in the most intimate of the arts, that the forces of progress and reaction are engaged in their most conspicuous contest. Tradition, snobbery, commercialism, and all the instincts of parasitism combine against reason, education, and common-sense to decide whether the outer shell of woman shall express her upward growth or her inner decay. That the world has room in it for all kinds of women and all kinds of adornment is undoubted. If a woman deliberately chooses to express herself through the medium of fantastic clothing few feminists will say her nay. The danger to the whole movement lies rather in outside pressure exerted upon all women to persuade them into the sartorial extravagances of the few, and to induce in them a parrot-like imitativeness. Like all arts, that of adornment, to be legitimate, must be based on truth. In order to be beautiful it is not necessary for a woman to resemble either a peacock or an Indian. That she so often does so is a relic of her shackled past. Every effort that she makes to express her true needs in her dress is a sign of her growing freedom. The hobble skirt might be held the most characteristic of anti-feminist phenomena, the "middy" blouse perhaps a sartorial symbol of that cleanliness, freedom, and capacity for service which is Feminism.

PART III

PRESENT PROBLEMS

CHAPTER XI

THE HOME OF TO-DAY

HAVING briefly reviewed the upward struggle of the feminist movement to the present time, we must consider the general position of women to-day in its bearing on the progress of the movement if we are to decide whether Feminism really represents what women want, as it claims to do. The point as to whether all women know that they want it, in so many words, is of course immaterial. Our claim is that all women, even so-called anti-feminists, approve some of the doctrines of the movement, and that the majority approve many, when they know what they are. We further believe that women as a whole will and do value each succeeding gain of Feminism as it is won, and that what withholds the approval of many beforehand is merely the innate conservatism of humanity. We believe that those women have a right to speak for their sex who are admittedly representative of what is finest in their sex, and we affirm that such women are to-day feminists.

In thinking of the contemporary position of women one instinctively turns first to the central

point of their lives. How do the English and American homes of to-day measure up to the standard of Feminism?

A home is in one sense merely a house in which one lives. But in the deep and racial sense it is a place prepared by two mating adults to shelter their love and their young, and it is in this fundamental sense that I wish to consider it.

If the home is a place of spiritual peace and renewal for adults, and a place of safety and happiness for children, it fulfils its functions; otherwise it falls short of them. If civilization does not supply for the world's families homes which perform these functions —if adults cannot obtain rest in their homes nor children happiness—civilization has not yet deserved its name. Of what avail pomp and empire, machinery and science, if there is a canker at the very heart of life, if there is not happiness within the family itself? That no glory can give happiness without love, every man knows in his heart. Without love the child cannot grow, and without the child the glory would pass with the race. Therefore the home is the first point for feminist analysis.

The vast majority of homes are those of the poor. It must never be forgotten that when feminists speak of women they mean all women, and when they demand a programme of reform they demand it for women as a whole, not for any one class.

In England the homes of the poor are totally unfitted for the functions I have described. The houses or rooms are wretchedly built, sanitation is archaic, baths for the most part unknown, arrangements for heating and cooking primitive in the extreme, and cleanliness, by reason of these defects, largely impossible. In the country water is rarely laid on at all; in the city there is seldom a faucet for each family. The very poor sleep, eat, wash and cook, are born and die, in the same rooms. In effect, the very poor are forced to live like animals, and then punished for behaving as such. Nor is the case of the moderately poor very much better. Noise, dirt and crowding confront them in the cities, isolation and squalor in the country. The infant mortality rate in England is high; it is highest in a district (Glamorgan) where women are not employed outside their homes at all, but where housing conditions are particularly bad.

Poverty is so great that cities are feeding their school children in order to give them strength for their lessons. Englishwomen of the working class look old at thirty; they labour incredible hours under mediæval conditions at housework, washing and the bearing and rearing of children, but they have no money of their own except a maternity benefit of thirty shillings under the new Insurance Act, and they are not the legal guardians of their own children. They may not decide the abode, education, or reli-

gious training of their children—the father does that—but they are arrested if the children are dirty or neglected, and while the father is almost always let off with a reprimand, the mother is often sent to gaol. Wife beating and kicking are commonplaces in England, and magistrates are very slow to grant separations in cases of such assaults, while even if they are granted the maintenance orders attached to them are notoriously difficult to collect. Divorce is financially beyond the reach of the poor. Drunkenness is exceedingly common among men, and is the cause of the majority of the assaults upon their wives. But no locality has the right to refuse to be saddled with a public-house (or saloon) in its midst, and if it did have, women, being voteless, would have no voice in the matter.

These are but a few of the disabilities of the home life of England's people. It can be seen at a glance that they resolve themselves into three groups, economic, legal, and moral, and that they press much more hardly upon women than upon men, as everything to do with the home must.

The material disadvantages of the English home are the result of low wages and selfish landlordism. Both of these can be partly mitigated through organization and the ballot. Workmen spend enormous efforts on the first point, and are gradually raising wages, but they give little attention to the

second because the discomforts of the home mean less to those who are out of it all their working days than to those who are in it. The improvement of housing conditions is primarily women's affair, and for that they need the ballot. Municipalities are beginning to work in this direction, because some women are enfranchised municipally. Meanwhile, as wages are low, women desire to help the home by earning a second wage to supplement the man's. The right to work for wages is another tenet of Feminism which women are preaching and practising in increasing thousands.

The legal disadvantages of women in the English home can be cured by public opinion expressed through the ballot. Women can help develop public opinion, but they cannot force its translation into law.

The moral disadvantages women labour under in the English home, such as the possession of a drunken, brutal, or unfaithful husband from whom they cannot obtain relief, can be slowly mitigated by education and legislation. Education is obtained by boys in their homes and at school. The home as described above is not always the finest place for moral education; the boy has little chance of learning to respect womanhood when his own mother is an unpaid drudge subject to the domination of his father. At school boys and girls are segregated, so that the

nimble mentality of the girl has no chance to win the boy's respect, and he only knows her as a being obviously his muscular inferior. He is still taught the story of Adam and Eve at school, but he is not taught the beauty and mystery of sex. This he never learns. The facts of sex, when his overcrowded home does not prematurely force them on his notice, he picks up in perverted form from the least clean-minded of his playmates. When he goes to work at fourteen he finds his wage is almost double that of a girl similarly employed. He learns that the state aids in insuring his father against sickness, but not his mother, and he learns that a girl may consent to her ruin at sixteen. He learns that England is a man's country, that men dominate its laws, religion, industries and homes, that they alone are citizens, that the whole social fabric is built up not for women, not for children, but by men for men. With these innumerable suggestions of woman's inferiority about him on every side, in his home, school, and playground, in the church, polling-booth, factory, or office, it says much for the decency and kindliness of his instincts that he gives her what respect he does. Nevertheless it remains true that the women of the people have a far better position both in France and America than in England.

Feminism demands a change in the status of the Englishwoman in her home. The change cannot be brought about in a day or a decade; but through co-

education, sexual instruction, the equality of the sexes as citizens and before the law, the adequate punishment of crimes against the person, the adequate safeguarding of maternity, and in a hundred other ways, the whole mental attitude of men towards women can gradually be reconstructed.

In the homes of the upper and middle classes Englishwomen suffer certain disadvantages in common with their poorer sisters, while they face other difficulties peculiarly their own. Physical brutality and drunkenness with the wretchedness of material surroundings they of course escape, but the domestic relation laws hang over them like the sword of Damocles, so that for the unhappily married woman of any class there is little hope of relief. The position of English girls of the gentle class in regard to marriage is singularly inept. In France girls are rendered eligible by means of the "dot," and their marriage is arranged for them by their parents. In America girls have money left them, or expensive (and often useful) education given them, and they enjoy considerable opportunity for social intercourse and unchaperoned friendship with men of their own age. But in England they fall between these alternatives. They are seldom given any practical education which would enable them to make their own livings, while primogeniture ensures the bulk of the family inheritance to the eldest son, that remaining for the daugh-

ters being usually a mere pittance. Nor are they as a rule given any adequate allowance during their parents' lifetime, the excuse being that "the boys are too expensive." Girls are consoled for their lack of advantages with the prospect of marriage, but their marriage is neither arranged nor are they given any adequate opportunity to achieve it for themselves, their freedom to enjoy the companionship of men except on the most formal terms being limited to a degree. There are thousands of English homes to-day where the daughters can arrange neither their lives nor their friendships, but merely the flowers in their mothers' vases. All this is of course changing, and changing very rapidly in the middle class, but the home life of girls still remains on the whole seriously disadvantageous to their best interests.

The inadequate business training of boys in England, and the overcrowding of the professions, together with the continually extended period of study which they entail, constantly advance the age at which it is desirable for young men of the gentle class to marry. The knowledge of this fact, together with the deplorable segregation of the sexes before marriage, apparently renders young Englishmen both very careful and very conscious in the presence of unmarried women, so that to one who is used to the much more normal attitude of American men, the self-chaperonage of the youthful English male is

vastly entertaining. To young girls, dependent for their chance of a vocation and happiness upon these same young men, it must be vastly trying. As girls are being rapidly permitted to earn their livelihoods in the middle class, their greater independence is increasingly making possible healthy and free friendships, and young men are not so spoilt by women's too obvious dependence on them; but the upper class remains somewhat archaic in this respect.

The continually later age of marriage obviously increases the moral disadvantages of the modern home. The sexual instincts of men and women are officially unsatisfied at the age when they are most urgent. This means that girls who are given no outlets of honest work and ambition become nervous and restless, and that young men resort to those irregular relations which inevitably dull the edge of their finer instincts towards women, and play irreparable havoc with their ideals of life at the age when those ideals are normally highest.

The sisters and mothers of the young Englishman develop his egoism by their habit of personal service, which the fag system in the great schools of England encourages the boy to expect of his subordinates. The sight of pretty sisters waiting upon their lordly school-boy brothers is still common, and I have seen a charming woman remove her son's muddy boots from the hall where he had thrown them, without

apparently the least conception of how bad it was for him that she should do so. The results of such training are found in the too frequent unpopularity of the young Englishman abroad and in the colonies.

In spite of all changes for the better, the status of the unmarried woman in the English home remains derogatory to both her dignity and man's, and the realization of this fact yearly adds thousands of recruits to the great suffrage army.

The position of the married English gentlewoman is full of anomalies. Legally it is bad, both the laws and their interpretation discriminating in favour of the man. The double standard of the divorce law makes it impossible for her to obtain freedom from a grossly unfaithful husband except through his concealed collusion, and the partiality for the father shown by law and judges in regard to the custody of the children is notorious.

Financially the married Englishwoman might be worse placed. Marriage settlements still obtain in the upper class, and an allowance for housekeeping and dress is much more customary than in America.

Socially the English wife has some distinct advantages over her American sister. Just as there is less companionship between the sexes before marriage in England, so there is more afterwards. The English girl has socially less freedom, the English wife more. Also, she is more frequently a partner in her hus-

band's career than in America, though less so than in France.

A number of causes contribute to this fact. I have referred elsewhere to the obligations which the landed gentry owe to their class, their estates, and their tenantry. These give the wife a distinct part in the husband's affairs and provide a considerable outlet for her abilities. She becomes his partner in the performance of the hundred social, religious and philanthropic duties which his position entails. Again, the Englishman, whether landed or not, is incurably addicted to sport, and the Englishwoman, being athletic, enjoys her husband's society on the hunting field, yacht, race-track, golf-course, and elsewhere. As part of his duty to his class the Englishman takes an active part in politics, and here as elsewhere his wife is expected to follow him, organizing, entertaining, canvassing, and even speaking. Furthermore, the professional or business Englishman works shorter hours than does the American. He gets home earlier, takes Saturdays off, and has more time to devote to his family.

In fact, the existence of a large leisure and semi-leisure class of men in England is at the root of the whole difference. Social life is an affair of both sexes. A London hostess's drawing-room at tea time is filled with almost as many men as women; even her lunches are not denuded of the male sex. Men

being part of the social game, a clever woman is able to advance her husband's affairs by successful entertaining. Social ability is an asset in a woman; men find a business value in those activities which her sex has made peculiarly her own. Snobbery enormously enhances these values. Such is the anxiety to penetrate into the class above one's own, that a financial deal has been negotiated as the price of an introduction to a duke. Many an Englishwoman among the nouveaux riches hides beneath a butterfly exterior a business partnership with her husband none the less valuable for its masquerade. In one class the partnership may take the form of a fine performance of joint public duties, in another of a clever manipulation of social and financial wires; in either case it has at least the double advantage of welding the interests of husband and wife, and of giving the latter a general value apart from her domestic one.

The misfortune of these social customs lies in the fact that they foster the personal and indirect methods which are among the induced faults of our sex. The Englishwoman has absolutely no direct power in law or in fact (save, if a widow or spinster, as a municipal voter) but she has a very considerable indirect influence, which she has often learnt to use only too well. This is of course an old evil, based on class and not on sex. The price of this influence is a higher one than a democratic American woman would be willing

to pay. The vocation of society wire-puller which an old social order offers women is totally contrary to the spirit of Feminism, and must be entered in the sex's debit account. On the other hand, the greater leisure of Englishmen and their addiction to politics and athletic sports are of real value to their wives, and entirely in harmony with the lines of progress indicated by Feminism.

In America the segregation of the sexes after marriage appears to foreigners one of the most singular and unfortunate developments of social life. It is breaking down before the encroaching popularity of games and country clubs, and it has never been more than partial in the small towns, but in the cities it is almost complete.

The American man is, materially speaking, the finest husband in the world, but he wrongs both himself and his wife in one particular. His conception of marriage is apparently a state in which the man gives and the woman receives. He gives his wife everything—except himself. The well-to-do American woman has innumerable varieties of "good times," but she does not have the comradeship of her mate. If the complete human being is made up of the union of a man and a woman, there must be singularly few human beings ranging the United States. After the honeymoon the typical American business man gives his wife every luxury he can afford, and some that he

cannot, and then, secure in the consciousness of having performed his share of the bargain, appears to forget her in the real business of life, which is the getting of money for the fun of getting it. The continental view that the American man is the world's supreme money-lover is, I am convinced, entirely incorrect. He does not love money, for he has no knowledge of what it can buy. Any average European nobleman has a far keener appreciation of its worth than he. He encourages his wife to love money, but for himself it is the game that he loves. He is the world's keenest hunter, but he hunts dividends instead of foxes; he is the world's greatest fighter, but he fights rival corporations, not rival armies. He lives more intensely than any other man, and knows less of living. His comprehension of life is as limited as would be a soldier's who had never done anything but manœuvre, or a hunter who had spent his whole life following the spoor of his prey. Until recently this business man prided himself on taking no holidays, and found himself old at fifty. He was splendid, but he was not a husband, still less a father.

The effect of this method of life upon the home is obvious. I believe Arnold Bennett did not exaggerate when he observed that the American man goes home to his office in the morning, and away from home to his house at night. To the business man his home is too often a strange house in which he sleeps,

occupied for a few years by one or two unknown children, and for part of each year by a charming lady whom he admires, and who uses it to give luncheon parties to women. This charming lady is quite faithful to him, and he is, I believe, usually so to her, but rather because he loves others less than because he loves her more. If he has little time to give to her he has less to spend on other women. This man puts his wife first after his business—but such a long way after!

The situation is rapidly changing for the better. The men of this generation refuse to stand the pace of the last. The automobile and golf-course lure them for the week-ends, and the fast developing country life claims part of their summer. Their wives play golf with them and cultivate their gardens.

But one can understand how the older conditions encourage Feminism. The wives of the earlier type of men find their lives incomplete, and the intelligent among them enquire why, if marriage for women is the whole of life, there should be so little of it? They assume that it is not the whole, and seek to find life's other parts. Hence the clubs, and all the other organizations of which I have spoken.

There has been a great deal of cant about the small family of the American woman. She has been accused of race-suicide. There are instances of course, particularly among the over-rich, but in the main I believe

the accusation to be grossly exaggerated. The subject is difficult, but until we know much more about the results of climate, unnatural upbringing, idleness, and lack of exercise upon the fertility of women, we had best be lenient in our judgments. Also, until we know more of the man's share in these results discretion is perhaps the better part of condemnation. In my own very wide acquaintance with women I most rarely meet one who does not desire children.

It may perhaps be that the decadence of love brought about by the over-absorption of men in business contributes in no small degree to the reduction of families. Normally, the more love there is between a couple, the more they desire the child which shall immortalize their love. With most women—though not all—the conditions of love and maternity are so interwoven that where one is decadent the other appears sacrilegious. The great majority of women do not desire a child by a man they no longer love, and if the wife of the business man finds the flower of her love prone for lack of tending, can the blame of its withering fairly be laid on her?

The American woman is proud, and has a high standard in marriage. She is perhaps not wholly pitiful, but the young are never that, and she is the daughter of a young land. She demands much of marriage and, when it fails her, is apt to forego it. Hence the high divorce rate. She does not compro-

mise easily—again the quality of a youthful race. She is over-confident, perhaps, of her ability to wrest the best from life even at the cost of bruises. But what is the net result of this refusal to accept the second-best? What is the status of marriage in America? Unhesitatingly I say that nowhere is it held more highly and nowhere does it better deserve to be so held. The American middle class marriage, made young between people of the same class, often educated at the same school, with a college training behind them and honest ambition before, is, I believe, the finest in the world to-day.

I have been into scores of American homes of this type where I have found absolute mental comradeship between the couples, and a fine and sane love. Here is no race suicide, but houses built with special thought for the little occupants, and money saved before marriage to meet the emergency of their birth. Often the wife earns too, part of the time, so that the children may have better surroundings. Time is made by the father for hours with his family. He would rather "succeed" more slowly than deny himself and them their common life.

In such homes, based upon enlightened comradeship and a wise sharing of burdens, I have usually found both partners feminists. Often the husband has taught his wife her love of the movement, and always the cause has seemed to them the call of a

wider duty, the dream of a higher and more perfect citizenship.

The homes of the American poor have of course much the same defects as those of the English, or the poor of any other nation. Slums are plentiful, squalor abounds, motherhood is turned to drudgery. But the laws protecting the mother and child are for the most part better than in England, with notable exceptions. Maternity grants are unknown, workmen's compensation acts almost so, child labour is frequent, and the age of consent often too low. The difference lies rather in the interpretation of the laws by the courts, which breathes a spirit fairer to women. Wife-beating is not a national custom; indeed among the native born it can be said not to exist. Finally, drunkenness in the American-born working-class is less frequent than in England.

There can be no question whatever that the general estimation in which women are held by men is higher in America than in England. This is saliently true in every department of women's work, but it is also true in the homes themselves. Girls are more valued, they are given a fairer start in life. In America girl-infants are not hailed into the world with paternal regrets for their sex. From their first breath to their last, their opportunities march more nearly with those of their brothers than in England. This is so clear to me, after years of observation of the country, that (if I

may venture to be autobiographical) I have been forced into regretful gratitude that my daughters were born alien to my flag.

The causes of this difference must be left largely to opinion, but I should point to three. First it can be traced to the old pioneer days, when women were scarce and therefore valuable, and when they proved through a hundred dangers their right to stand shoulder to shoulder with their men.

Again, the absence of class distinctions develops a frame of mind in which, though the thinker is as good as anybody else, anybody else is as good as the thinker. Democracy, as I have tried to show, not only levels class domination, but sex domination. Equality is too big a word to be the rallying cry of only half the race. These are the reasons why the American West, Australia and New Zealand, all pioneer countries, have so readily granted woman suffrage, and why ancient monarchical Europe is so slow to do so.

Finally I think the national system of coeducation has enormously bettered the position of women. The sane comradeship and understanding which it brings to boys and girls lie at the very base of the feminist ideal. Segregation of the sexes during childhood and adolescence is totally unnatural and stimulates the artificial view of women obtaining in Europe. Coeducation, at least during childhood, should be a feminist truism.

On the whole then, in spite of far from perfect laws, and a too great specialization of duties between husband and wife, those women are fortunate who inhabit an American home of the comfortable class to-day. Because they realize this, because they desire to return to society some of the good they have received from it, home-keeping American women are entering the ranks of Feminism by the hundred thousand. They are happy, but others are wretched; their houses are clean, but their cities are unclean; their children are strong, but the children of the poor are sickly; they have leisure, but their men are overburdened. They believe in democracy, they believe in womanhood. For service and not for gain they come. Not in bitterness of spirit as many of their English sisters, but with a glad confidence, they are joining the march of the world's women towards the sun.

CHAPTER XII

WOMEN AND WORK

"We claim all labour for our province."

Clear and lofty from the wide spaces of Africa comes this strain, the utterance of the prophetess of Feminism, Olive Schreiner. Little can be added to the study of Woman and Labour given in her book of that name. We can but recast in lesser moulds of speech the fundamental truths she has expressed. So that it is with the hesitation of an amateur following a master upon the concert platform that I approach this chapter of my volume.

In all that Feminism claims it never forgets the needs of the race. If its demands were derogatory to the species they would have to be denied, and if man did not deny them, nature would. If the generations to come were to suffer for the activities of woman today, those activities would have to cease, at whatever cost to her. She has borne more than half the race's burden from the beginning, and if need be, she has the strength to bear it to the end. The race is hers, her child, her masterpiece, and she can never be indifferent to its needs. For no glory of human enter-

prise would she imperil her mightiest monument, the bodies of the thousand generations to come, who shall express the beauty for which she darkly strives. But Feminism, reviewing the evolution of the race, asks if it is best accomplished by arresting the mental and physical development of its women at almost every point, and arbitrarily denying to them all spheres save those of child-bearing and household labours. It points to the utter stagnation that has overtaken every civilization that has so limited the activities of women, whether the Greek or Roman, Oriental or Mahomedan. It asks, further, what *is* the natural sphere of women?

At first sight, it might appear superfluous to agitate this question to-day, particularly in America, where the door of every trade and profession is at least partially open to women. But, mingling with the inflowing tide of advancing Feminism, runs a sinister cross-current of prejudice and misapprehension, which ever supplies new dangers to block the flow, in place of the old ones swept away. Casual readers of Olive Schreiner or of Charlotte Perkins Gilman ask why this insistence on opportunities for work which are no longer denied? They do not watch the progress of women with the keen vision of our leaders, and these dangers are unknown to them.

The arbitrary delineation of the sphere of half the adults of the world by the other half continues as

dogmatically assertive to-day as ever, though with less power to translate assertion into coercion. The strength of the opposition lies in the assumption that women are as alike as guinea-pigs, that what is the law for one is the law for all, that while human males are "men," the human female is "Woman." So deeply rooted is this view that an able German writer, Frau Meyreder, has just created a sensation among European reviewers by venturing to combat it.

The strength of the feminist position lies in the obvious truism, that you cannot determine the capacities of any sentient thing until you give it freedom to demonstrate them. More, that you cannot define the limitations of humanity until that half of it which is racially the more important is permitted the fullest development. Furthermore, Feminism asserts that true morality can only be reached when it is the result of choice, not compulsion.

We desire that all women should be trained in some productive employment. We desire that all women should be trained in health and morality, and then we demand that all adult women shall be left free by law, church, and custom, to marry or not, have children or not, continue to work or not, as their individual needs and consciences dictate. Custom permits this freedom of choice to men; it must permit the same freedom to women. Where individual action is concerned the law has no voice, except where such action affects

the community. Where it does, the law is rightly emphatic. Society puts its ban upon immorality, because immorality endangers the community; upon illegitimacy, because it cheats the child; upon abortion, because it imperils life. But society has no right to say to a man "You are free to work and to marry," and to a woman "You are not free." It has no right, by the weight of its opinion, to force parenthood upon women, but not upon men, or to tolerate intentional bachelorhood but excoriate intentional spinsterhood.

Though the vast majority of women will always desire love and children, there is an appreciable minority that does not. Is the public to take upon itself the function of a God, and read the inner needs and conscience of this class? There is plenty of fine work in the world, useful to humanity, for spinsters to perform. They may prefer collective to individual motherhood, or they may not have the mother-nature at all. That is their affair.

Again, there are women, though these are more rare, capable of a splendid mate-love but not of a mother-love. There are women who know themselves unfitted physically or spiritually for maternity. The matter then lies between themselves and their mates. If the man is willing to marry on such terms, why should the casual critic intervene?

A very clear distinction should be made between the

woman who shirks maternity and she who foregoes it. The shirker is despicable in any class or either sex, but shirking can only be cured by training, not by legislation. The public is sadly ready to assume that all childless married women come under this category—it should beware the sin of pharisaism.

But the prejudice against the work of women does not end in condemnation, as in these more intimate matters, but develops into deliberate attempts to exclude both married and unmarried women from some employments and to penalize them in others. These efforts to interfere with the most vital right a human being can possess, the right to earn his bread, are met by feminists of every nationality with the most unceasing and rigorous opposition. Throughout the ages women have been forced to labour at every variety of heavy and uncongenial task without reward. Now that they begin to choose their task and claim its reward, a chorus of protest, hitherto unheard, rises on all sides. It is unnecessary for me to refer again to the objections still raised in Europe, and not silenced in America, to women entering the professions. In England neither solicitors nor barristers will admit women to their ranks, and the House of Lords has decided, with truly British logic, that as women have not practised law they may not. As this inhibition only affects a limited class, however, it is

not so important as those which endanger the freedom of the poor.

There are two classes of legislation affecting women's work, which must on no account be confused. One is socially valuable. It aims at safeguarding the health of the workers, thus increasing their happiness and efficiency. The other is profoundly anti-social; it endeavours to force one class of workers out of a trade at the behest of another class, and seeks arbitrarily to impose parasitism upon an otherwise productive group.

Laws reasonably limiting the hours of women's work, establishing a living wage, or providing rest during the months immediately preceding childbirth, come under the first heading, and are essential to progress and liberty. They are to be found in all socially-awakened countries, and are on the programme of all recognized feminists.

The second type of regulation is, to my mind, the most dangerous foe that women have to face to-day, far more serious than the inevitably futile opposition to their enfranchisement. In overcrowded countries such as England, organized workmen are beginning to find in women rivals in their trades. No questions are asked as to the need of women for their work; whether they are married or single, with or without homes, is not enquired into. The men simply deprive the women of their work, either through political

influence or arrangement with the masters. In Edinburgh women have been forced by the compositors' union out of the printing trade, a form of sedentary employment peculiarly fitted to them. In Yorkshire the pit-brow girls, models of health and strength, are being excluded by the miners' union from their means of livelihood. Three times parliamentary action has been sought to make their employment illegal, yet every jot of evidence brought proved the work not only safe, but markedly beneficial to their health. In endeavouring to steal their livings from these girls, chivalrous members of Parliament explained that they could not endure the thought of women's faces covered with coal-dust! They did not state what other work these women could hope to obtain in a notoriously congested district, or whether they thought the possible alternative of the streets better than a dusty, but honest, livelihood.

Where, as in parts of Lancashire among the cotton operatives, women are strongly unionized, this tragic error is not committed. There is one scale of wages, and that person gets the work who can perform it best. These jealousies adjust themselves as workmen realize they can find in women not rivals but partners.

A far more dangerous sign is the deliberate suggestion made more than once by a member of the present British government, that all married women should

be excluded from the factories in the interests of the birthrate,—not from sweated government contract work, performed in attic bedrooms, not from the ill-paid washtub or back-breaking office scrubbing, but from the well-paid weaving and other factory trades, with their high grade of labour and legally supervised conditions. According to this gentleman, a mother must not work, but is at perfect liberty to starve. Fortunately for thousands of children's dinner-plates, the census returns have rather checked this movement, by proving that a sanitary factory is a better place for potential mothers than an insanitary kitchen.

Unregulated industrialism has been and is a great danger to women, as I pointed out in an earlier chapter, but the lack of work is a greater. Most married women enter the factories unwillingly and out of dire necessity. We can mitigate the evils of their work, but we cannot deny it to them until we are prepared, by motherhood pensions or some similar scheme, to make up the financial loss involved. There is a type of working woman, however, more especially in the better organized trades, who prefers the factory to the kitchen. We must not deny her the right to choose unless in our own class we are prepared to do the same, and force educated women to discard the saddle, golf club, piano, or library, in favour of the stove. Such an act is unthinkable, and yet working-

women sometimes find as much needed stimulation in the change from kitchen to factory as we do in the variety of our own interests. We must safeguard the child, we have no right to penalize the mother.

For the use of this type of workingwoman, feminists advocate the crèche. They do not demand a crèche upbringing for all infants, nor factories for all women. They do assert that, provided the child is safeguarded, it is for the individual woman to decide whether she shall work inside the home or out. The great majority will choose the former, a minority the latter. Sometimes the choice will be indicated by necessity, sometimes by convenience, again by temperament. But not to have the choice is to be a slave, and slaves do not produce a free race. Incidentally, society can watch over the health of both mother and child much more efficiently in the semi-publicity of the factory and crèche than in the privacy of the tenement kitchen.

The infringement of the married woman's right to work, however, is not yet nearly so evident among the poor as in the middle-class. Here the battle between freedom and bureaucracy is being waged continuously. In England the marriage of highly trained civil servants, doctors, factory inspectors and the like, entails resignation, and the rule has a tendency to creep into the by-laws of municipalities and departments of state all the world over, save where

women can guard themselves with the ballot. It amounts to this, that for an important type of public work in which women are essential, a class of celibates must be found, or the work must be disorganized by a passing stream of short-term employees. The marriage of a class of picked women, physically and mentally trained, is to be penalized by the lifelong loss of their professions, and the public is to be penalized by the loss of these women's work. This, without consulting the husbands involved, and regardless of the presence or absence of children. Obviously, such a severe tax on marriage is a direct inducement to its evasion in favour of some form of free union. The whole thing reminds one of Alice in Wonderland, and is an excellent example of male logic as applied to women. Marriage and motherhood are sacred, and must be encouraged at all costs. Certain public work is vital, and must be performed by women. For this the finest women are needed, as they are for motherhood. But the finest women may not give the state both work and children, they must choose between them. The state encourages marriage among its male servants, but penalizes it among its female. Yet motherhood is more sacred than fatherhood, and a woman who is not a mother is a "waste product."—Excellent!

The most salient example of this folly is found where the teaching profession is involved, a notable

instance being provided by the Board of Education of New York City. Its action is typical of the old autocratic assumption by Authority over the lives of others. This power democracy was created to destroy, but it still lingers entrenched wherever men arbitrarily restrict the activities of women. As an example of both class and sex domination the action of this Board deserves more than passing notice.

Thousands of picked and trained women are employed in the New York schools at work which presupposes a special love and knowledge of children. The courts of the state have decided that the present law gives the Board of Education no right to dismiss a teacher by reason of her marriage, though it is free to refuse to employ married women in the first instance. Under these conditions what action does the Board take?

First it passes a by-law decreeing that no married woman shall be appointed to the schools unless she is a widow, or can prove to the satisfaction of the Board that her husband is physically or mentally incapacitated, or has deserted her for a period of one year. The humour of this by-law lies in the repeated assertion of members of the Board that their one object is the efficiency of the schools. If that be so, the by-law should of course read: "No married woman whose husband is mentally and physically sound can be an efficient teacher. If he is in an asylum, or is a hopeless

invalid, his wife is efficient, and we can employ her."

Obviously, the rule was made not in the interest of the schools, but because the Board, being composed almost entirely of men, felt called upon to exercise that patriarchal supervision of the private lives of women which has been the sex's immemorial perquisite. These gentlemen felt it improper that a wife should earn her living when her husband could do it for her—let it be forbidden her!

Thus was the application of the married woman disposed of. But what of her who marries while already employed? If she has not the delicacy to resign, and the courts do not permit her expulsion, how might the arbiters of her destiny adequately regulate it? Real ingenuity was shown at this point —"Let us wait till the married woman expects to be a mother, deny her application for leave of absence, and then, when absent, *dismiss her for neglect of duty!*" Thus spoke some genius and, behold, the problem was solved, private morality was vindicated, and the efficiency of the schools maintained. Teaching presupposes a love of children. The married woman who is not a mother is less efficient than the spinster, says the Board, and we would dismiss her if we could, but at least we can purge the schools of that most inefficient of all women, the trained and experienced teacher who is also the mother of a child.

Unhappily for patriarchs, their saws no longer go unchallenged in these feminist days. Women do not lack champions in America, and a section of the public demanded facts to supplement these theories. The Board reluctantly agreed to endeavour to find them, and ultimately produced a report which proved that while the absences of married women are slightly more frequent than among the single (a loss of about three more days a year), their efficiency rating is distinctly higher. As there are still a few mothers who have not been hounded out of the schools, this rating includes them. Alas for the patriarchs, forced to learn that theories should be deduced from facts, not predilections!

Obliged to recede from the argument of efficiency, the Board has brought its real motives into the open, and has given the public its views on morality and philanthropy. The sight of a pregnant woman in the schools would degrade the children of the poor, already forced to witness such horrors in their homes. The unmarried teacher has to support an aged parent and younger sisters; when married, she suddenly ceases to have to do so, and must make way for another unmarried woman who has to support etc., etc. A teacher has no right to marry a man who cannot support her (*and* apparently the aged parent, etc., into the bargain). Above all, THE WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME.

In this immortal phrase lies the very crux and innermost core of the whole anti-feminist position. Let me restate it. *The* Woman's Place is in *The* Home. There are no women, old and young, rich and poor, gifted or dull, trained or untrained. There is only Woman. There are no homes, needy or opulent, crowded or childless, happy or unhappy. There is only *The* Home, and *The* Woman's Place is in it. Women are not individuals. They are not to be allowed individual action. Even their husbands may not decide their course with them. Only anti-feminists may do that, when they decree that Woman should be in The Home.

This stricture used to apply to all women. But gradually the spinster has emancipated herself, so that to-day Woman, used oratorically, means married women. Truth to tell, even the anti-feminists would be discomfited if it implied the unmarried. There are few amongst them who would care to forego their domestic servants, trained nurses, dressmakers, and manicurists. Conservative public opinion allows women the choice between extra-domestic work on the one hand, and marriage and maternity on the other. It is not yet willing to tolerate the demand for both. Here lies the next great struggle of Feminism.

Love is the expression of nature's creative force, labour that of humanity's. Both are essential for

human happiness, since without one humanity would cease to exist, and without the other it would cease to progress. Women have always laboured, and always must; our task is so to organize society that their labour is beneficial to it, not derogatory. The attempt to restrict the work of women to the household is insincere, since the industries which used to make of the home a varied workshop have dwindled to the gas-stove and the duster, and since child-care involves only a few years out of the span of a woman's life. Not only is work essential to happiness, but it is essential to strength. With our false ideas of the division of work and leisure between the sexes, we have created in America to-day not merely the largest class of idle and extravagant women the world has ever seen, but, I venture to say, the largest class of delicate women. That the fruit of idleness is a decadence of physical no less than moral fibre, is a truth few doctors would be willing to deny. It is notable that nervous breakdowns are much less common among professional than among society women. In my ten years' experience on the stage—a profession making great demands upon the nervous system—I remember only one case of temporary nervous breakdown among my acquaintances, and that was attributable more to private unhappiness than to overwork. But in social life these breakdowns are a commonplace. It is only by rigidly adhering to a régime of

athletic exercise that the unoccupied woman can keep herself in good physical condition, and such a régime requires for its maintenance a tenacity of purpose which a life of idleness seldom develops. Idleness has produced much decadence in the aristocracy of Europe, and were its growth not being checked by the feminist movement, it would produce a decadent womanhood throughout the world's middle-class. No jot of evidence has ever been forthcoming to prove that serious mental activity induces sterility in women, but the empty excitement, irregular hours, rich food, and consequent tendency to excessive adipose tissue common in social life, is exceedingly likely to do so. Such certainly would be the verdict of any animal breeder on such a condition among his stock. On the other hand, that high mentality tends to a limitation of fecundity is true of the whole animal world, for in her higher types the law of nature is to exchange quantity for quality.

Feminism seeks to readjust the conditions of modern life and labour, so as to make it possible for those women who desire both racial and economic productiveness to have both. It does not seek to impose either type of productiveness upon those who, for physical or temperamental reasons, may not desire them. It does seek through educative methods to persuade the largest possible number of women of the desirability of economic independence, both for

its individual and racial value; it has little need to persuade them of the desirability of marriage and maternity,—among normal women nature takes care of that.

Productive work, performed under proper conditions, might indeed be called a requisite of health, self-respect and happiness. It is the antidote of inertia, parasitism and depression. It is the servant of love, for it frees love from the need of gain. It is the servant of democracy, for those who live upon the toil of others cannot be part of the world's brotherhood. It is the servant of joy, for in work lies forgetfulness of self. It is the inheritance of women, and it has helped to create their strength and their courage. To deny a woman the work that her hands and brain may do is to deny her spiritual and mental life, while to force her creative ability into stereotyped and outworn channels is to stultify it. To deny her the functions of her sex is to deny her part in our common racial life. Either denial is fraught with cruelty and danger. Humanity, it has been said, "is usually right in what it affirms, wrong in what it denies." Let it not deny women their birthright. At least until, by free experiment, all women have learnt what their true limitations may be, they demand all labour for their province.

CHAPTER XIII

WOMEN AND THE SUFFRAGE

A LITTLE time ago I found myself in a great American city, where a Woman Suffrage Parade was to be held for the first time. I mixed with the people that waited along the route, and saw how many they were, how quiet, and how civil. I noted that the police had stretched ropes along the curbs to keep the crowd from pressing into the pathway of the procession, and that the whole route was cleared of traffic. Some large stores had hung out the yellow suffrage flag, and yellow daffodils were being worn by many in the crowd. There was an air of expectancy and questioning. "What will this new thing be like?" the watchful eyes demanded. Reporters were everywhere with their cameras, and moving picture reels were grinding.

Presently came the beat of a drum, then the fifes, a line of mounted police, the American flag, the band—they were here! Line upon line of white-clad figures with yellow badges, short-skirted, booted, and hatted in simple white. Banners, large and small, gold and white, blue and gold. Pennons, black college gowns

and caps, another band, more white figures with yellow sashes, banners again—thousands of women. Eyes front, earnest faces, marching feet, down the sunshine of the street they came, to the lilt of their country's songs. A carriage passed with white-haired women in it—pioneers these, with a guard of honour of young girls. Then more marchers, workers now, with the signs of their trade. Then a banner reading "Mothers." I turned away—I who had marched in many such processions but never seen one—for my eyes were wet. O mother-heart of mankind; for so many ages shut away from the sun, bound and crippled, veiled and barred, held ignorant and soulless; called unclean, burnt on man's pyre, chastised at his command, blasted for his sins, bowed by his burdens; denied and defamed, or petted and belittled; your child exposed upon the mountain, offered up to a male god, sold into slavery, never yours, but now at last your own! O mother-heart of the world; silent so long, awake now, white and courageous; loyal to yourself and your charge, marching to the music of your country through this city that your sons have built, seen of all, fearless and unabashed in the light of the sun!

Did all these marchers know what their act betokened? Did all see the years out of which that great procession wound? Did all remember the devotion of those early leaders which had made it possi-

ble? Some did, for there was a high look on their faces. Some too in the crowd remembered, for mine were not the only misty eyes. There was little cheering, but there was no disrespect; the crowd had wondered, and now it saw; it went away thoughtful.

Such was the effect of the first suffrage parade in one city, and there have been many such. The great strength of the suffrage movement lies in the fact that the demand for enfranchisement is wide enough to appeal to all classes, so that as it urges democracy it actually helps create it. Nothing save a great war has ever done so much to break down class distinctions among women as has this movement, which accomplishes the result not through sorrow but through joy, not at the cost of life but to its gain.

It must be remembered that though enfranchisement is only a branch of the tree of Feminism it symbolises to many thousands of women all that they hope for their sex. It is to them society's sign-manual, endorsing the ideal of women unbound. They hope much from the direct power of the ballot, but even more perhaps from its indirect results. It is, after all, a fragment of sovereignty, and so long as all men and no women own this sovereign status, women see no hope of a true equality between the sexes. But whether they value the movement for its wide base in the lifting ideals of humanity, or whether their end is more immediate, being centred in specific reforms,

women who join the suffrage ranks cannot but be optimists. After democracy, the great gift of the movement to women is undoubtedly happiness.

I have spoken elsewhere of the stimulating effect of work upon the human frame. But there are thousands of women in the suffrage ranks who have never before known this stimulation, because their work has been insufficient, or has not been freely chosen. These are the home-keeping women whose children have left the nest, and who, never having loved housework for its own sake, find its meaning gone with those for whose sake it was gladly performed. Of these, too, are the spinsters engaged in monotonous and ill-paid drudgery. To such women work in the suffrage cause comes as an inspiration. It is not selfish, but altruistic; it is not performed alone, but in groups, and often in the open air; it is always varied and never dull; it is cooperative, social, and idealistic; above all, it is successful. It teaches reasoning and logic; it teaches breadth of mind, loyalty, and courage. It exacts organization, obedience, and the power to command. It scorns indirectness, repudiates weakness and demands strength. In a word, it trains women in all those qualities in which through no fault of their own they have hitherto been most deficient. The movement for equal suffrage brings to countless women their first glimpse into a larger and more socialized

life, and is of inestimable value to them, quite apart from their attainment of its object.

While breaking down the isolation of women's lives and the barriers of class, the suffrage cause is doing even greater work by binding the women of alien nations with a common bond. The twenty-six nations of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance imply a solidarity of women, which together with the growing solidarity of labour, presages the day of the world's peace. Thus after two generations we may believe with Ibsen that from the women and the workers will at last come redemption from the forces of reaction.

The actual attainment of the suffrage by the women of these twenty-six nations is admitted by political students to be merely a matter of time. Each year swells the number of enfranchised American states, and in England Mr. Lloyd George has declared it to be unthinkable that any Liberal government shall again be returned to power which is not prepared to deal promptly with woman suffrage. Among all nations which believe in democracy the reform is long overdue, except where, in the younger countries, it is already largely won. In addition to Australia and New Zealand, eleven western American states and the territory of Alaska enjoy equal suffrage, while the state of Illinois has won it for municipal and national elections. The vote is used by the majority of women

wherever they possess it, the percentage of women registering and voting running from 55 in Finland, up to 80 in New Zealand and sometimes as high as 90 in parts of the American West. The proportionate figures for men are never more than twelve per cent. higher than for women, and have occasionally been lower.

As an instance of the heightened regard in which the enfranchised woman is held must be quoted the conduct of the men of Wyoming. This state enfranchised its women as early as the year 1869, while it was yet a territory. Twenty years later, it was about to be admitted to statehood, when Washington demurred at endorsing a state constitution which contained the then revolutionary clause of equal suffrage. Statehood was eagerly desired by the men of Wyoming, but their reply to Washington was worthy of the strong pioneer women who were their wives and mothers. "We will stay outside the union a hundred years," said they, "rather than come in without our women."

Why our Norse cousins, of all the peoples of Europe, alone seem readily able to practise generosity to women is difficult to say. But since 1906 Finland and Norway have given women the vote on the same terms as men; Iceland has passed the bill, which now only waits the signature of the King of Denmark to become law; and the parliaments of Sweden and

Denmark have introduced government measures to that end. The intelligent liberalism of the Scandinavian peoples is of course well known, but the cause of this phenomenon lies deeper to my mind than a mere matter of doctrine. The Northman seems to have kept alive that ancient reverence for women which was one of the distinctive attributes of his race, and which so astonished the Romans when they beheld it in his brother the Goth. The climate of the north seems to develop mysticism rather than eroticism, and the former ever holds woman as high as the latter thrusts her low. Moreover, the hard conditions of life in these northern lands keep the pioneer spirit alive, ensuring a hardihood in women which wins men's comradeship and respect, and withholding the luxury that breeds parasitism. Again, the comparatively small population and area of these countries has for hundreds of years prohibited their preoccupation with wars of conquest. Militarism has not dominated the lives of the people, so that the over-masculinization of Germany—to take the extreme instance—has been avoided. It is probable, at least, that to these causes can be traced the quick response of Scandinavia to the demand for woman suffrage.

A very different spirit animates the British legislature, which has six times passed a suffrage bill only to shelve it conveniently before the third reading. It is true that in England this shilly-shallying is the result

of party politics, but it is made possible by the spirit of Englishmen as a class, to which I referred in another chapter. Still, politics being what it is, allowance must be made for the fact that the existence of five separate voting qualifications in England enormously increases the partisan spirit in which their extension to women is approached. In the American states either all sane adult women must be voters, or none, and no political party need feel it will necessarily be the loser by the change. But in England Conservatives might gain by enfranchising land-owning women, and Liberals by enfranchising the wives of the poor, so that neither party is willing to do justice to women at the risk of assisting the other to increase its membership.

The minor boon of municipal enfranchisement has been enjoyed by English spinsters and widows for a generation, and good service is being rendered by individual women as mayors, town councillors, and the like, but the number of qualified women voters is too small to have more than a limited effect. All that they have done, however, seems to have demonstrated their worthiness, if we may judge from the practical unanimity with which mayors and corporations of the great British cities petitioned parliament in favour of the Woman Suffrage or "Conciliation" Bill of 1910.

Municipal government in England does not carry

with it the problems which confront it in America. There it is fast being recognized by political students that one of the great draw-backs to good city government lies in the absence of home rule, and the intrusion of national politics. Here an overhauling of the whole electioneering and administrative machinery is necessary, and experiments are already being made, notably with the commission form of government. The great stumbling block in the way of these reforms is, however, the political partisanship in which men have trained themselves. Where, let us say, the inspection of milk is involved, it can be of no consequence whether a candidate believes in a high or a low tariff, Mr. Taft or Mr. Wilson, but only that he should be able to protect the infant population against impure milk. Yet men, through force of habit, persist in being guided by these extraneous considerations. I recently visited a city cursed with a high infant mortality rate where a plumber had been nominated to the post of milk inspector on the strength of being a good Republican. Moreover, in the opinion of a leading physician of the town, this plumber "would not know a cow by sight if he met one."

This devotion to red tape and the mechanics of government as against its spirit is undoubtedly one of the weaknesses of the male sex. Feminists are usually slower than their opponents to brand a human quality as either male or female, but I think it may safely

be said that men are more occupied with the *game* of life and women with life itself. If this be true it is fair to assume that the advantage of non-partisanship which their lack of political training gives American women will not be wholly lost after their enfranchisement, and that they will continue to devote more thought to a candidate's programme or personal fitness than to his political complexion. This, at any rate, has been the experience of all enfranchised states and countries. Women are slower to tie themselves to parties than men, their enfranchisement enormously swells the ranks of the independent voters whose existence keeps politics healthy, and they increase the pressure at municipal elections exerted in favour of independent or reform candidates. This pressure is especially needed in city elections, since—for reasons too intricate to form part of a brief study of Feminism—it is in America our municipal household which is most in need of a spring cleaning.

In the short time that they have been enfranchised in these few countries of the world women have done remarkably well. In the newer countries the suffrage came so easily that the women had little organization and less training behind them and had to learn their duties by performing them. In future this drawback will in general not exist, since women are everywhere preparing for their responsibilities, as I have shown. In spite of all difficulties, however, their record is so

good as to lend colour to the theory that it is in executive and administrative work, rather than in creative gifts, that the special genius of women will be found to lie.

The record of women can be traced in the rapid increase in all suffrage states and countries of legislation tending to better the condition of the home, the mother, the child, and the youth of both sexes. The results of such legislation can be read in the world's infant mortality rates. The three countries which lead the world with the lowest rates are New Zealand, Norway, and Australia, three equal suffrage countries, with respectively 56, 67, and 68 deaths for every thousand infants born in 1911. Comparing these figures with the German Empire's 192, Japan's 157 (in 1908), England's 130, or Ontario's 117, we gain some idea of the disadvantages both old and new countries suffer which do not call their women to their councils.

The record of women is also found in the increased respect for the person shown by the laws they help to make. All their indirect influence has not sufficed in England to raise the age of consent for girls above sixteen, nor adequately to punish male and female procurers. The raising of the age in Norway, California, Colorado, Wyoming, and elsewhere to eighteen; the California red light abatement and injunction law; the appointment of a woman judge in Chicago to try

girl delinquents; the sentence of ten years recently passed in Australia (where the white slave traffic is almost unknown) upon a male slaver, and described by the judge as "lenient"; the rapid appointment in one suffrage community after another of women police to deal with juvenile offenders; these and many other changes show that governments answerable to women consider the things most vital in women's code. But even had no useful legislation been obtained, the educative influence of citizenship upon the women themselves would alone have sufficed to justify it.

Again the record of women is to be found in men's opinion of its success. I have pointed out how the Scandinavian nations have followed one another in granting the reform. Norway gave partial suffrage to its women in 1907, and having found the results good, granted full enfranchisement in 1913. Kansas had had municipal suffrage for a generation, before it gave the full suffrage in 1912. The successful trial by Wyoming of equal suffrage and her determination to retain it has already been mentioned. Watching her example the men of ten contiguous states have found it good, and followed it. The Australian states watched each other in the same way, and by 1908 all had followed the example of South Australia, who enfranchised her women in 1894. Even in England the municipal franchise was enlarged, after

trial, to include eligibility to office. Twice the Australian Parliament has passed resolutions warmly endorsing the results of woman suffrage, and the Colorado legislature has done the same. No state that has tried it has ever receded from it (since a little accident in New Jersey one hundred years ago); each state has been a good example to her neighbour. Woman suffrage, on its merits, is a proved success.

I pointed out in my first chapter how inevitable it was that the whole woman's movement should originate in a class that had leisure to give to its development. But suffragists to-day are happy in the knowledge that they include in their ranks not only the great majority of representative professional women both in Europe and America, but practically all organized and enlightened women workers. Whether it be farmers' wives in the American Grange, the women teachers, factory workers in the Women's National Trade Union League, the splendidly unionized women textile workers of Lancashire, the English National Union of Women Workers, or any of a hundred other such organizations, the representatives of women who labour with their hands and brains work and speak for the status of citizens. Men's unions are hardly a pace behind women's, and the Labour Party stands for woman suffrage in the British Parliament.

The workers and thinkers of the world, those who

study the needs and the griefs of humanity, and understand at all the laws of progress, are with women in this stage of their great movement. Of the forces of reaction I shall have something to say in a later chapter.

This little book is not the place for a detailed survey of the suffrage movement proper. It seeks rather to study the psychology of the woman's movement as a whole, and the broad trend of its progress, so that any extended list of facts and statistics on this aspect of the movement would be out of place. Still less does it seek to give a detailed argument for woman suffrage; hundreds of admirable books and pamphlets have done that. To those who love both women and democracy the enfranchisement of half the race, with the status and dignity which it entails, is inevitably necessary, and to those who do not love them the theories of this book can make no appeal.

CHAPTER XIV

MILITANCY

In the course of the suffrage agitation in England, there has arisen a phenomenon known as Militancy, which is largely incomprehensible in that country, and entirely so in America. The British public is at least partially familiar with the facts which have led to the militant agitation, and with the intensity of political feeling which is characteristic of English life. But to the American newspaper reader the actions of the "Suffragettes" loom on his front page as a series of isolated antics devoid of plan, connection, or excuse. The accounts he receives leave him dazed, and profoundly uninformed, for he has not the key which would resolve these separate particles of the puzzle into a coherent whole. It is always exceedingly difficult to judge the actions of a body of people animated by an enthusiasm which one does not share; but when an actual ignorance of the facts is added to this difficulty, a fair judgment becomes impossible. This is vaguely felt by the majority of Americans, who are inclined to shrug their shoulders in complete bewilder-

ment, rather than to condemn the militants out of hand.

Such is the only just course. So entangled in the deeps of human nature, in bitterness, bigotry, and oppression, is militancy, so lifted to its heights in loyalty, self-sacrifice and courage, that it would be a very wise psychologist indeed who could divide the heights from the depths and truly measure the human gain and loss of this movement. As for its political merit or demerit, it is entirely impossible at the present time to gauge it. That militancy has lost the suffrage bill a few friends in Parliament—fair-weather friends at best—is undoubted; that it has forced continual reminders of the cause upon a House eager to forget is also beyond question. One is inclined to think that militancy gives with one hand what it takes away with the other. Certainly the historian alone will be able to decide whether its damage to suffrage is in excess of its benefits. At present, among those who know all the facts, judgment is coloured by temperamental leanings towards, or away from, the use of direct action; while from those who do not know the facts judgment is impossible. One Radical member of Parliament has told me that militancy would inevitably win suffrage, while a Conservative member as definitely informs me it has killed it. After these mutually destructive pronouncements I have fallen back upon that refuge of the uncertain, an open

mind. All my study and enquiry upon the subject of the technical efficacy of militancy, as an agent for vote-getting in England, has but reminded me of the truth of the adage, "Time will show."

Of the human and spiritual, as apart from the political, gain or loss, the onlooker may more readily form a theory, but he must remember that it *is* a theory, coloured by his own temperament, since in ethics there is no ultimate appeal save to the conscience. Before discussing the existing theories on this aspect of the problem, it would be well for me to give a very brief résumé of the facts out of which militant action arose.

During the twenty years of Conservative rule which preceded the present Liberal administration, the suffrage movement in England was of necessity dormant. Suffrage organizations existed, and bills were introduced into Parliament, but the large Conservative majority ensured them a still-birth, and there was nothing left for suffragists but a policy of "watchful waiting." Meanwhile the cause remained unknown to the great mass of voters, though a majority of Liberal members continued to pay it lip-service.

It has long been the universal custom in England for a political gathering to ask questions at the end of a meeting, and to "heckle" the speakers with questions and repartee throughout its length. Pursuant to this custom, at a meeting in Manchester during the cam-

paign preceding the elections of 1906 which returned the Liberals to power, Miss Christabel Pankhurst, law student, and Miss Annie Kenney, mill hand, inquired the suffrage views of an important Liberal candidate, Sir Edward Grey, from the floor of the hall. The question was inconvenient, since lip-service out of office sometimes entails action in office, and woman suffrage was not officially on the Liberal programme. Being inconvenient, the question was ignored, and being ignored it was persisted in, with the result that the two slim girls were ejected from the hall, arrested for holding a protest meeting outside, and on refusing to pay a fine were sent to gaol.

Thus was militancy born, from the initial error of ejecting two perfectly harmless questioners who, had they been men, would undoubtedly have received an answer to their query. Militancy arose from the incurable inability of the average British male to regard a woman as a person with individual rights. Had these girls asked a question about a man's measure, tariff reform for instance, they would not have been ejected; it was only when their enthusiasm was enlisted in their own behalf that it became an impertinence. But had the Liberal stewards at that meeting been keenly desirous of furthering woman suffrage, they could not have performed a greater service to the cause. The ejection, arrest and imprisonment of these two girls created a considerable stir, and the

quick wit of the Pankhurst family seized upon them as an effective method of propaganda. The ill-success of the questioners was sufficient evidence that little was to be expected from the new Liberal government unless it were roused, and the Pankhursts, with their rapidly gathering adherents, proceeded to rouse it. The Women's Social and Political Union, as their organization was called, instituted a policy of guerilla warfare upon the government, of an ingenuity unparalleled in the history of politics. Their whole scheme of questions, deputations, processions, and reminders, together with the energy of their more peaceful propaganda, was one of colossal advertising power, and involved absolutely no physical harm to the person or pocket of anyone except its participants. By breaking down the public ignorance of, and indifference to, the movement, and lifting the embargo of the press, the early militants rendered an inestimable service to woman suffrage not only in England but all the world over, which has been universally admitted, even by those who most deplore their later tactics. Indirectly they created the English anti-suffrage organization, which has rendered valuable aid to the cause by stimulating the efforts of the suffragists, while showing up the paucity of the opposition both in numbers and arguments.

It must not be forgotten that until 1909 the illegalities of the militants were of a purely technical order. "Obstructing the police in the execution of their duty" was the gravest of their misdemeanors, acts

such as are committed by all strenuous political and labour agitators in season and out. The heinousness of their offences lay, in the public eye, not in the acts themselves, but in the sex of their perpetrators. John Bull was astonished and grieved beyond measure at an assertiveness which he considered the privilege of his own sex alone. But while frowning, he smiled; while condemning, he perforce admired. He could not withhold the homage of his sporting instincts from any so acute, so resourceful, and so game, as were the early militants. In spite of the newspaper campaign of vituperation waged against them, these suffragettes did not lack popularity with the man in the street.

Meanwhile the Government and its agents continued to trick the women in Parliament and browbeat them out; the brutality of Liberal stewards increased; court sentences were lengthened; and slowly the early spirit of almost gay confidence changed to bitterness, and retaliation began to take the place of passive resistance. The campaign became a duel between the bodies of the women and the wills of Cabinet ministers. The sufferings of the former increased, and annoyances to the latter multiplied. A spirit of fanaticism made itself evident in the women, whose campaign began to appear an end in itself, rather than a means. At last, in response to the incitements of ministers and vengefulness of officials, the tactics changed, and the campaign of destruction began.

When Mrs. and Miss Pankhurst decided to introduce physical violence into their propaganda, a definite split occurred in the ranks of the Union. Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, staunch lieutenants from the beginning, felt obliged to secede, and their example was followed by numbers of others. Later, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst withdrew to form an independent organization in the east end of London. The great days of the Union, of its power, prestige and popularity, were over.

All this sad declension was the result of the almost miraculous obtuseness of the officials with whom the militants dealt, combined with their own white-hot enthusiasm and inability to compromise. Action and reaction followed with lightning iteration. Had the first question been answered, expulsion would not have occurred. Expulsion led to a protest meeting. Had this not resulted in arrest, or had the participants been released with a warning, there would have been no imprisonment. So on, through more questionings, more ejections, to imprisonment in the third division. Had the early prisoners been given the benefit of first division treatment as political offenders, there would have been no hunger-strike, no retaliatory forcible feeding, no "Cat and Mouse Act," no accompanying criminal acts of vengeance for intolerable suffering and indignities, and so on throughout the sorry tale. No exaggeration of the sufferings of imprisoned hunger-and-thirst strikers could be possible. No characterization of the stupidity of officials,

from their own point of view, in giving the militants the advantage of martyrdom, could be too severe. No condemnation of the coarseness of members of Parliament, who shouted with laughter like vulgar schoolboys at every reference to forcible feeding made in the House, could be too great. The whole spectacle has been a grave blot upon British dignity, wisdom and humour.

Fanaticism has existed in every great movement of history. In the suffrage movement it has been reduced to a minimum, a very small minority of agitators in one organization out of scores, in one country out of twenty-six, having developed it. Bloodshed has been a concomitant of every masculine revolution of the world; the woman's revolution is being accomplished with the loss of no blood except their own. So far they have been true to their sex, which commands that they who give life should not take it. The great mass of suffragists, both in England and abroad, have stood aloof from even this modicum of violence, which is the development of a comparatively small group of women played on by the extraordinarily intense personalities of two remarkable leaders. These acts are quite impossible in America, for they have their origin in a masculine attitude toward women which does not obtain here, and are the result of circumstances which have no parallel elsewhere. The respective attitude of French men and women toward each other makes militancy among French feminists unthinkable. Indeed it is only in Germany

that I can conceive even the possibility of its ultimately arising, in response to the German male's estimation of women. The possibility is one, however, which German women themselves would doubtless be the first to repudiate.

With these explanations before us, what theories can be formed of the spiritual standing of militancy?

In the first place I think everyone, unless of anarchistic temperament, will agree that the use of violence and destruction is ethically wrong. It is unquestionably contrary to the teachings of Christ, and is most emphatically contrary to the instincts of women. The use of violence as an argument is indeed essentially a male characteristic, and may be said to have been the cause of one of the world's greatest evils, war, from the beginning of human time—and to be a quality with which woman, the life-giver, should have nothing to do. That she has extensively had to do with it throughout history, however, is a fact that cannot be disputed, and only goes to show that men and women are on the whole wonderfully alike, and that no quality can be safely called all male, or all female. Every woman who has fought in a man's cause, or in defence of her home, has been honoured; indeed the instinct of defence is necessarily an attribute of the female, and from Joan of Arc downward, women who fight defensively are true to their deepest natures. We are here dealing, however, with offensive violence. Even for this women are praised when the deed is done on man's behalf, but when—for the

first time since the Amazons—it is for themselves, they are excoriated. There is a lack of logic here, but in such matters we must all follow our inner promptings, and to the mass of us such violence is very deeply forbidden.

Again, the use of methods of reprisal against not only a political party, but against masculine society as a whole, is developing an atmosphere of mutual hatred which leads to further reprisals, and creates a condition of spiritual anarchy. All the lower instincts of mankind seem to be awakened by these events, and we see instead of justice, vindictiveness, and instead of faith, desperation. Ugly things come to light, vulgar, crude and brutal things, which some of us used to hope civilized humanity had trodden under foot into the past.

So far, then, the balance of spiritual judgment seems to weigh against the militants, who have brought not peace, but a sword, and have created not love, but hatred, and not beauty, but brutality.

All this is true, and explains our instinctive repugnance to militancy; yet those who try to see life broadly cannot be blind to other aspects of the uprising. Many women of a naturally violent and heady disposition have undoubtedly been drawn into this movement in its later stages, but that does not detract from the fact that some of the most chivalrous and spiritual among women have also entered it. When such people as Lady Constance Lytton, who, Olive Schreiner says, "embodies for me the highest ideal of

human nature," are to be found active in a campaign, when writers of the distinction of Elizabeth Robins uphold it, it would be folly to assume that it represented nothing more than wrongheadedness.

We live in an age of much superficiality, and a dangerous willingness to compromise with our ideals. Few indeed are those willing to sacrifice their easy comfort to an abstraction; there is much cynicism about things profane, and more about things divine. The song of life is brilliant rather than profound, and he who vainly essays the heights too often falls to the sound of laughter rather than of tears. This being so, the spectacle of a band of enthusiasts, so intense, so loyal, so single-hearted, and so extraordinarily self-sacrificing, cannot be without its lesson to a too complacent world. It is true that the militants have no sense of humour—but, one imagines, neither had the saints. We in America are in danger of forgetting that laughter is a potent medicine, which can kill as well as cure. Perhaps the pathetic but amazing courage of the militants was needed to shake some of us out of our easy acceptance of the ills about us. Unquestionably, these women's sufferings have spurred hundreds of both men and women from apathy to activity. When others, however mistakenly, were giving all but life, and sometimes that, for a cause, the rest of us could no longer remain satisfied with the arm-chair prophecy that "it was coming." Indeed, a shrugging acquiescence in the evils of things as they are was so common among comfortable wo-

men on both sides of the Atlantic, that perhaps nothing less than the electric shocks supplied by the militants could have galvanized this type into action. Nor can the resurgence of the male brute induced by militancy, be counted wholly as an evil. If this brute exists among men of all classes, if the woman-hounding instinct is not yet bred out of any large section of British males, it is time that women knew the truth. It is bitter and terrible that these deeps should be stirred up, but until we see them and recognize their existence, we can never hope to eliminate them. I have purposely avoided any description of the tortures which have been inflicted on suffragettes by men of all classes maddened by the mob-spirit, because the truth is beyond printing, but there are women in England to-day who could tear themselves for having borne sons capable of such acts. Perhaps just such horrors were needed before women could be forced into seeing that their own weakness and compliance had rendered them possible. Women must be courageous enough to teach men tenderness; their timidity will never do so. Is the hound tender to the hare?

The militants have shown us a type of woman made of steel and fire, unquenchable and only breakable by death. Mistakenly, primitively, crudely, they have yet demonstrated to a material age the power of the spirit. For all our repugnance to the fanatical violence of their later methods, we cannot but learn anew from them the truth that those who

lose their lives shall gain them. For we have to recognize that in giving health, friends, and almost life itself to the service of an abstract cause, some among these women have won to a selflessness which has lifted them above the judgment of ordinary humanity, and has unlocked for them the gates that hold the spirit confined. They have won, as Miss Robins has beautifully put it, the freedom of the city of the soul. Under the fiery ordeal of their labours, the spirit of some among them has, I think, withered to acrid ash, but in others it has been released into a purified flame, and been caught up to regions too rare for us to follow. Sylvia Pankhurst, dying on the steps of the House of Commons, and forcing the Prime Minister to receive her friends or be a party to her death, won a victory of the indomitable spirit over all the powers of convention, which, though it gained a sneer from the vulgar, might perhaps win applause from Olympus. She, however, is one of those who take no part in the destruction of inanimate matter; she merely flings her own frail body and adamantine will against the forces of obstruction, conscious that though one be broken the other is indestructible.

The spiritual balance only partly weighs against the militants. So interwoven are the coarse and fine threads of their spinning, so shining is the woof that travels their heavy warp, that we must leave it to a Divine Artificer to pronounce the final decision on their work. While we pity and deplore, we shall do well to remember and obey that law which reads, "Judge not."

CHAPTER XV

SOME RUNAWAY RADICALS

In the endeavour to develop accurately a description of a great movement, the use of metaphors is a temptation. I have likened Feminism to a tree rooted in nature and spreading into a variety of boughs, some essential to its growth and others superfluous. I might also describe it as the march of an army consisting of a main body, a rear, vanguard, and skirmishers. Under such a definition the organized suffragists might to-day be given the main or central place, the half-way suffragists—those who believe in office-holding and municipal franchise for women—the rear, while the anti-suffragists would represent the stragglers. The van would be occupied by the followers of Olive Schreiner and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, who demand the right to work for all women, married or single; and the skirmishers would be that small group of radicals who are attempting to push on into a hitherto unguessed-at territory. Skirmishers are of value, though they often commit errors of judgment, fall into morasses, or are lost in the depths of gloomy forests. But others profit by

their mistakes, take their places, and lead the marchers along safe paths. Just as every movement has had its berserkers, or fanatics, represented in Feminism by the militants, so every movement has its skirmishers, whose advance aids the main body, but whose mistakes cannot retard it. Such skirmishers are the ultra-radical writers and thinkers, some of whom are doing useful work and have never wholly lost touch with the main body, while others are doomed to fall by the way, or serve as decoys to draw the fire of the opposition.

Among this little body of radicals are to be found two opposing schools of thought. One group seeks to minimize the importance of sex; the other maximizes it. To one the likeness between men and women is greater than the differences; to the other the differences are fundamental, the likeness subordinate. Or to put it differently, to the first group the common denominator of the sexes is the highest, to the second the lowest. In one group the family is entirely subordinated to the individual; in the other the family is all, the individual being, like the workers in the hive, largely sacrificed to it. Moreover, to the first group love tends to become merely a means of expression for the individual, while to the second it takes on a spiritual importance which makes it the sole touchstone of morality.

The first school of thought undoubtedly owes some

sanction to the writings of Mrs. Gilman, but the extremists have gone far beyond her, and have developed their philosophy to the point of absurdity. So unimportant is this little group of runaways, however, that its opinions would not be worthy of mention but for the fact that they have drawn the heavy fire of the anti-feminists. The second school has for its mouthpiece the distinguished Swedish writer, Ellen Key.

Mrs. Gilman is unquestionably the first feminist writer in America, and one of the first three in the world. Her writings are intensely humanitarian, carrying with them the highest standard of racial and social obligation for both sexes. Her greatest gift is that of seeing humanity as a whole, not in sections. This being so it becomes obvious that to her sexual characteristics are secondary to human. She sees the gulf between the sexes over-wide as a result of man's domination, and prophesies the gradual bridging of the chasm through the development of women, until comradeship and comprehension take the place of loneliness and misunderstanding. She believes monogamy and the single standard of morality essential to the well-being of the race. She believes furthermore that only with the economic independence of women before and after marriage will come their full development and freedom. So far she undoubtedly voices the views of the whole van-

guard of Feminism. There is a point, however, at which her thought may be said to advance beyond the van and place her abreast of the skirmishers, and that is in her view of the method by which married women should attain their economic freedom.

The majority of advanced feminists—Mr. Wells being an example—are inclined to lean toward some system of state endowment for motherhood, which would supplement the intermittent wage-earning capacity of poor mothers and enable them to give their best care and vigour to their children. The tax for this pension is usually placed upon all men, married and single, thus bringing the care-free bachelor to the rescue of the burdened father. Those who feel that this method savours too much of paternalism advocate the enforced payment of a fixed portion of his salary by the man to his wife, thus ensuring the recognition of her work in the home, and giving her a fixed economic status.

There is a considerable divergence of opinion as to these two methods, usually dictated by the political views of the individual. Those who believe in the development of collective responsibility advocate the state pension, while those who desire the stimulation of individual obligation recommend the legal apportionment of the husband's salary. Both methods have serious and well-recognized drawbacks, but either is held preferable to the present un-

defined and often precarious economic status of the wife.

Mrs. Gilman endorses neither of these methods, urging that "women support themselves and help support their children, men doing the same. If insurance is necessary it should be by the state, *for the children*, not for the women. Motherhood should not be considered an economic function."

At this point Mrs. Gilman outstrips her contemporaries in Feminism, and comes into line with the skirmishers. It must not be forgotten, however, that she is always careful to avoid dogmatism. She may personally advocate certain methods, but she never seeks to deny others their freedom of choice, believing that all ways will be tried before the ultimate solutions are found. But the total elimination of the male's responsibility toward the mother-female is felt by most of us to be fraught with danger. At present he undoubtedly has too much financial and too little personal obligation to his family, but to take from him the first duty would not ensure his performance of the second, and, if he had neither, his own development would be seriously retarded. Nature gives the human male complete freedom in this matter; now that civilization has painfully taught him the law of obligation he must not be encouraged to forget the lesson. On the other hand, nothing is more grotesque than the oft-made assumption of

anti-feminists that when the man ceases to be a complete financial slave to his family, when the wife assists at all in easing the economic burden, the husband will instantly abandon all effort and become a parasite in his turn. This suggestion, in the indignity it offers man, is worthy of the mythical man-hating suffragette dear to the cartoonist, and comes ill from those who assume the defence of the male sex. But it is a notable fact, familiar to any who have been active in suffrage campaigns, that the anti-feminist, unconsciously or not, holds men to as low a standard as the feminist holds them high.

No writer of repute has developed the theory of women's economic independence further than Mrs. Gilman, but one or two newspaper writers and minor agitators have ridden their hobby to the point of frenzy and, in the endeavour to lead, have incontinently fallen into a ditch. Among these may be classed Miss Dora Marsden, who recently edited for the few brief months of its existence a little London weekly called "The Freewoman." Some of Miss Marsden's early writings showed much ability, and the support which her journal originally claimed from suffragists was freely given it. Shortly, however, it became apparent that the editor held markedly anarchical views, and she rapidly changed from the championship of equal suffrage to a violent contempt for it. Synchronizing with this change in

politics came one in spirit, the paper became revolutionary and unbalanced in its moral tone, suffragists withdrew their support from it, it changed its name, and speedily disappeared. It had fallen into the hands of a tiny and rather decadent group of extreme theoretical anarchists such as are to be found in any European capital, and whose entirely unrepresentative character is familiar to any but provincials. As the little paper dealt, in its later stages, in the most open possible way with sexual problems, it created a brief "succès de scandale" which was immediately seized upon by ingenious anti-feminists and used to besmirch the standing of the great body of suffragists with which it had less than nothing to do.

In the philosophy of the editor of this little sheet women were engaged in a class-struggle against men for the domination that money buys. They were to support their own children, and to enable them to do so without intermission the use of the bottle was advocated in place of the breast after the third day of the unhappy infants' lives! Apparently the incubator alone was needed to lift the last "burden" from women. To the group which contributed to this paper the development of individuality was the sole disideratum, and if the good of society ran athwart it, the good of society could be sacrificed. That being so, there was nothing to prevent a "free" indulgence in passion or maternity, if the individual

woman believed the enlargement of her personality demanded these experiences. Hence the pratings on "free love" which anti-feminists have so adroitly advertised. To any familiar with this journal, or the group it represented, it is evident that these were the doctrines not of Feminism, but of anarchy, a philosophy peculiarly repugnant to the legitimate feminist. Indeed, by identifying this group with the suffragists American reactionaries have recently placed themselves in a predicament, since they have always asserted the identity of suffragism with socialism, and since it is obviously impossible for the suffragists to be simultaneously allied to two mutually destructive schools of thought.

The episode is trivial, but has been too widely paragraphed in America not to need explanation.

Such was one group of skirmishers, who used the shield of Feminism to cloak the colours of anarchy, and achieved the reductio ad absurdum of the doctrine of female independence of the male. Meanwhile individual journalists in Paris, London, and New York, too isolated to form a group, are winning a brief celebrity by exploiting their own conceptions of life under the guise of Feminism. To this type belongs a Mr. W. L. George, the author of an erotic novel, and of a book of essays entitled "Woman and To-morrow," published in England. His personal views on our sex were widely advertised in the States

through the medium of an article by him on Feminism which recently appeared in a much respected American magazine. On this account his name is more familiar here than in England, where I have been unable to find that he is known to the suffrage world, and where he has certainly been given no title to speak for any group of women, suffragists or others. Mr. George has every right to enunciate his individual views, but owing to his—perhaps unfortunate—habit of using the first person plural, a conception exists among those American anti-feminists who desire to hold it that he is in some way responsible to others besides himself. It is enough to say of his writings that, while they contain many truths, they are unfortunately touched at points by a sexual atmosphere more suited to the supper-club than to the debating-halls of feminists; an atmosphere which is markedly at variance with the utterances of women who have earned the right to speak for their sex.

Every great feminist, even the most radical, has been a moralist, from Plato and Mill to Julia Ward Howe, Josephine Butler, Florence Nightingale, Olive Schreiner, Jane Addams, Charlotte Gilman and Ellen Key. The feminist movement since its inception a hundred years ago has consistently fought vice and immorality in every form, whether the dual standard, the C. D. Acts, the white slave traffic, or the excesses of sartorial fashions. Suffragists rally to their ban-

ners not only bodies fighting such evils, but the whole weight of the Prohibition Party and the Women's Christian Temperance Union of America. Indeed, it may justly be claimed that a rigid and unbending morality has been almost an excessive virtue of the movement, so that feminists have sometimes lacked the width of mind which would enable them to comprehend what they could not condone. The attempt of a few neurasthenics on the one hand and reactionaries on the other to saddle the movement with a loose moral code is not more laughable than it is inept.

To a different category altogether belong the radical utterances of Ellen Key, the prophetess of the second school of which I spoke at the opening of this chapter. She is the author of four books of importance, two on child-life, one on "Love and Marriage" and one on "The Woman Movement." Her work is widely known in Europe, and she undoubtedly speaks for a recognized group in Germany. On the other hand her followers are very few in England and America, where she seems to have many admirers but practically no disciples, the national temperaments apparently not responding to her philosophy.

Singularly enough, there is much in the writings of Ellen Key which is more attractive to anti-feminists than to their opponents. She voices the views of those to whom sex is the dominant factor in life, and a great part of her writings is given to a glorification

of the home. The normal feminist usually takes for granted the fact that women need homes, and passes on to controversial topics, but anti-feminists devote themselves to an insistence on this unassailed axiom. True, in America a good deal of sentimentalizing on this theme has been indulged in by both sides, but in England the general habit is to assume that a good home is good, and should be maintained, that a bad home is bad, and should be improved, that some kind of home is necessary, and that these facts have never been denied.

Another point which Miss Key shares with anti-feminists is her insistence that all mothers should undertake the care of their young children to the exclusion of other occupations. Though I have not especially noted the carrying out of this doctrine in anti-feminist households, it is nevertheless one of their favourites, and runs directly athwart the belief of Mrs. Gilman and the majority of feminists that not every woman has the requisite gifts to make her a first-class nurse or governess, however trained, and that expert and often non-maternal care of small children during some of their waking hours should supplement the expert training of larger children in the schools. In seeking to persuade all married women to one vocation irrespective of their temperaments, talents or physiques, Ellen Key, in the opinion of most feminists, allies herself with the reaction-

aries. Feminists usually hold that a woman may perhaps be a good physical mother but a bad nursery-governess, and vice versa, and that these matters must be left to individual choice and arrangement if women are ever to be free to develop themselves and their children along the finest lines.

But in dwelling upon the subjective rather than the objective life, and in reminding women of the ever-insistent calls upon them of the life of the spirit, Ellen Key renders a real service to Feminism. So far she is merely a thinker contemplating a vision of the highest types of love and motherhood, and her views should stimulate thought in all. Nor would her leaning toward maternity pensions carry her beyond the vanguard of Feminism. It is only on one point that she leaves feminists and anti-feminists alike behind, and joins the ranks of a skirmishing party which, in the opinion of the majority, is doomed to miss the path.

This is where she advocates what is known as "the right to motherhood," which is a synonym for the right to *unmarried* motherhood. Her championship of unmarried maternity is, it is true, poles away from the cheap outcry of erotic individuals in favour of "free love," or the unpleasant belief of a few morbid persons that a woman is justified in using an unloved man as the instrument of her passion for a child. Ellen Key is unfaltering in her demand for the high-

est in love, and any union which is not mutually based on it is to her immoral. The difficulty lies in the fact that those who believe so deeply in love are inclined to put it above law. Where merely the law of man is concerned many will be found to agree with her, but where racial law is involved most of us must demur. If the woman of exceptional powers loves a man whom extraneous circumstances debar her from marrying, or living with permanently, she has the right to give herself a child by him, says Miss Key. The question immediately suggests itself why, if this be true, the woman of merely average powers has not also this right? If the great novelist may so assuage her hungry heart, why not the typical housemaid? That seems to be the first difficulty. But the second is much more important. An exceptional woman may gain enormously in breadth and power by having a child in this manner, and may be well able to support it and shield it from the world, but she has nevertheless broken the law which the race has evolved and which says that *the child needs two parents*. The matter of the marriage bond is immaterial in comparison with this deeper law. The child needs about it, to develop its character and understanding, both the sexes which together form the complete human being. Nor is this all. It is not only the woman who needs the child. The man needs him also. She who deprives a man who loves her of his child by her runs

counter to the spirit of evolution, which has lifted man from very small and ignoble beginnings by demanding of him that altruism which is his share of the joint responsibility of parenthood. Man, who may not nurse the child, who may never know the spiritual ecstasy of maternity, must at least enjoy to the full the lesser mental and spiritual joy of paternity, if he is to lift himself finally above the brute. The need of the age is for more paternity, not less, and such a doctrine as this is subversive of that need.

Miss Key and her disciples seem to have missed one point which, like the thimble on the clock in the old nursery game, is so salient as to escape attention. It is that very exceptional women, great artists, queens, women of wealth and others unusually placed, have throughout history availed themselves of the power nature gives them to have a child as the result of a temporary union. Moreover, wherever the woman has done so, society has forgiven her and has accepted the child—provided its mother were of sufficient eminence—while it has branded similar acts committed by obscure women. As this latitude has always been enjoyed, the majority of feminists see no occasion for its standardization into a doctrine. Miss Key admits that her theory applies only to exceptional women, and exceptional women do not need her endorsement to induce them to act as their inner law dictates, nor to obtain from society that

indulgence which it is ever so ready to bestow upon the gifted. No rule can be made from exceptions.

Far finer, it seems to most of us, and far more racially valuable, is the decision of Lesbia Grantham in Bernard Shaw's play "Getting Married"—"I am an English lady, quite prepared to do without anything I can't have on honourable conditions." For Lesbia does not mean legally, but spiritually honourable, and we do not see how an arrangement which cheats the child of one of its parents, and one of its parents of his responsibilities, can be that. The difficulty should be overcome by widening the opportunities for the union of would-be parents, rather than by increasing the number of one-parent families.

Such, very briefly, is the verdict of the majority of feminists upon the theories of some of the extremists. I have spoken of Feminism as a tree, rooted in humanity's nature. At the base of human life is a trilogy: man, woman, and child, the three in one which must always exist. All human views, methods and arrangements which tend to foster the growth of this trilogy are good; all which vainly endeavour to stunt one part for the sake of another's growth, or to separate the parts from each other, are false. Feminism has developed woman from a mistress and servant into a friend, thus bringing two of the parts into much closer harmony. It has helped develop the

child from under the puritan curse of being held the fruit of sin into the sunshine of being known the incarnation of love, and has thus lifted him into the circle of his parents' friendship. The age of Feminism is also called the age of the child, for a free and enlightened womanhood implies a noble and conscious motherhood. Everything which enriches the life of women must enrich the life of these children of hers—her husband and her babe. Free, she helps to free them; bound, she drags them down. Therefore, feminists know that their cause is in tune with the Song of Life. But there are some who do not hear the song, and they are the reactionaries, and there are some who hear it shrilly or confusedly, and they are the extremists.

CHAPTER XVI

REACTIONARIES

OPPOSITION to the most prominent contemporary demand of Feminism, that for equal suffrage, comes from three types of person. To the first type belongs the average man, whose tendencies I have analyzed in another chapter. The second type comprises those organized groups of men who for political or commercial reasons have cause to fear the votes of women. Such are the machine politicians, the retail liquor dealers, the caterers to vice, the grafting public service corporations, all those persons who fear that the sudden infusion into the electorate of an enormous class of moral and independent voters with an eye to house-cleaning may be dangerous to their business. The third type is that singular phenomenon, the organized anti-suffrage woman. As no sketch of the woman's movement would be complete which did not include a survey of this genus, I propose to treat of it briefly in this chapter.

The spectacle of a class vehemently striving against its own freedom is not by any means new in history, such is the force of conservatism in human nature.

Whether it be the Chouans in France, the slaves in America, the Hindu widows in India, or the agricultural labourers in England, groups and individuals have never been wanting who through loyalty to old masters or old customs have flown in the face of their own salvation. When, as on such a subject as woman suffrage, class prejudice and sex prejudice are added to conservatism, the wonder is, not that there are anti-suffrage women, but that there are so few.

Until recently Feminism at every stage was exceedingly unpopular with the average man, so that when the average woman espoused it she risked alienating the sympathy of those dearest to her. The result was that for a long time only exceptional women had the moral strength to join the movement. This enabled the average man to say with some truth that feminists were not typical of their sex, but a class apart, and to appeal to the *herd* instinct in women to keep them like the bulk of their sisters. Every instinct of softness, of clinging, of coquetry, of deference to the dominant sex, which has been fostered in women for countless centuries, militates against those who seek the freedom of Feminism. Every instinct for luxury, for special privilege, for idleness, which has been bred in the "lady" for generations, holds her back from Feminism. Every instinct of jealousy, of competition in display, of suspicion of her own kind, which has been induced in her by her sex-spe-

cialized existence, makes the way of Feminism hard for her. Women of these types, clinging, coquettish, privileged, jealous, idle, or luxurious, are rich soil for anti-feminist sowing, while women of the narrow ultra-conservative type are, like their corresponding males, born temperamental reactionaries. Such qualities are naturally induced more frequently in the upper than in the working class, and it is therefore among the well-to-do that organized opposition to woman suffrage is almost entirely found.

The woman anti-suffragists of England and America are distinctly differing types, the results of widely diverging circumstances, and it is necessary to consider them separately in order to gauge the value or detriment of either to the cause of women.

In England the "antis" are less thorough than in America. The complete anti is as extinct as the dodo, but the American variety adheres more closely to type than does the English, for a reason which I shall shortly make clear. The complete anti would of course be she who turned her back upon all the advantages she enjoys by reason of the Feminist movement, and was content to return to the status of her great-grandmother, without higher education, married women's property acts, professions, clubs, political organizations, or cheque-books. This the anti is not prepared to do, and therefore at best she is but an illogical halfway anti, using all the advantages and

privileges which Feminism has won for her in the past in order to defeat Feminism in the present. This seems ungenerous, but it is ever the method of the conservative.

Like King Canute of old, the conservative sits at the sea's edge, and at each succeeding wave commands that it rise thus far and no further. But, unlike Canute, he is not aware that he does so in order to prove to the world his own futility. The conservative always concurs in the progress of the past, while fearing that of the future. He serves the purpose of a brake upon the wheel of progress, preventing it from moving too fast for safety, but having neither the power nor the will to reverse its action. So it is with the female anti-suffragist. She accepts whatever good has fallen to her lot, but fears the infliction of further benefits. The tendency is temperamental, and she is in no way to blame for her conservatism.

In England all educated women are expected to take an interest in politics, the great national pastime. Many thousands are organized within the political parties, Liberal women—practically all suffragists—into the Women's Liberal Association and the Women's Liberal Federation, and Conservative women into the Primrose League. It is significant that while these Liberal bodies are entirely officered by women, the Primrose League is headed by men. Members of these leagues are expected to do electioneering work

of every description, and become proficient speakers, canvassers, and organizers. Moreover, in England women have the municipal franchise, with the right to hold all municipal offices. The result is that your Conservative woman (unlike her American sister) can, without violence to her temperament, define woman's sphere as including all political activities except the parliamentary franchise and candidature. No Englishwomen can be found to assert that their existing political privileges should be withdrawn. On the contrary, when Mrs. Humphry Ward, spurred to action by the militants, founded the Anti-Suffrage League, she did so for the purpose of furthering the activities of women as municipal voters while blocking them as parliamentary voters. This last vote, being the only novelty, was the only danger. It could not be said that Englishwomen lacked knowledge of domestic politics, so their parliamentary disabilities were credited to their ignorance of Imperial politics. Mrs. Ward, however, soon found herself to be too big a woman for her position, and abdicated her presidency in favour of the logical candidate, a man, an aristocrat, a Conservative, and an ex-Viceroy, accustomed to rule autocratically over the millions of a subject race. The new President, Lord Curzon, based his opposition to woman suffrage on the striking argument that the subjection of Englishwomen is a necessary concomitant of the subjection of Indian men;

the theory being that Indians (who have, incidentally, able women rulers of their own) could not tolerate being even indirectly ruled over by the votes of Englishwomen. But this exposition of the anti-suffrage case found little favour in women's eyes, and the doctrine of that other notable anti-feminist, Sir Almroth Wright, found so much less that Mrs. Ward was forced publicly to dissent from it. This gentleman, a specialist in the nervous diseases of women, and like all specialists consulted only by the luxurious class, came to the rescue of the failing forces of reaction with a letter to the "Times," purporting to be biological, which in good old mediæval style stripped all mental, moral, and spiritual attributes from woman, leaving her only her sex. This doctor, in bringing to light all the lurking sex-perversion of the upper-class reactionary mind, rendered the same service to women that the militants performed when they showed up the slumbering brute in the average man. The platitudes of Lord Curzon, and the biological twaddle of Sir Almroth, have reduced the English anti-suffrage movement to a point of absurdity it would never have reached under the intelligent leadership of Mrs. Ward. The association is officered and subscribed to largely by men, and carries a financial deficit in the present year. Mrs. Ward has ceased to work actively in it, and with her passes the only woman of real mental distinction who ever did so.

The moribund condition of this association is not wholly the result of the strides woman suffrage is making in England. It is partly to be traced to the fact that Englishwomen are not technically obliged to believe in democracy in order to believe in woman suffrage. As there are five qualifications for the vote, it would be possible for Conservatives to enfranchise their own women without enfranchising the so-called ignorant, and this fact makes a good many reactionaries, who would be confirmed anti-suffragists in America, willing to uphold a limited suffrage bill for the sake of party advantage. There are, therefore, more ultra-conservative women in the suffrage ranks in England than in America, where women and democracy are happily forced to walk hand in hand. The anti-suffrage movement in England is now largely a movement of reactionary men, and as such has little effect upon suffragists except to encourage in them ever renewed watchfulness and devotion.

In America the anti-suffrage women are, I think, more numerous, and certainly more efficient, than in England. They are officered by wealthy women who have leisure to give to the work, and have as good a corps of paid and unpaid speakers as such a negative cause could readily produce. They were first organized among the conservatives of Boston, and have spread to many of the cities of the East and Middle West. They are, of course, infinitesimal in number

when compared with the organized suffragists, but they have an active national press agency, and obtain good space in the newspapers. There are a few professional and business women among them, but the number is negligible, their strength being very properly drawn from the leisured and protected class. The number of men in these organizations is apparently few, which fact does credit to the average American male. He, in truth, is to-day only inclined to oppose the ambitions of women when they may interfere with his business; otherwise he watches their activities with an indulgent smile. Having been trained to give them whatever they ask for, he sees little reason to refuse their demand for the vote. He is no longer anti-feminist, but merely indifferent. His wife is no longer a servant, but too often a doll. His whole attitude towards women is contrary to that of the new man, and to the feminist ideal, but while his type is passing we have to recognize its still extensive existence.

If the English anti-suffrage woman is actuated by her political subservience to men and her training in indirect influence, the American type is stirred chiefly by class feeling. There are no aristocrats in America except among women, that is to say there is no other purely idle class, and it is always the idle who have least knowledge of the needs of workers. Add to this the fact that in American cities the workers are often

foreigners, and the class bias of the rich woman becomes easy to understand. Moreover, the American lady has not been trained in politics as has her English prototype; she has not known it as the pastime of the great, but as the business of the ignoble; she has been taught not to go down into the arena but to draw away her skirts. On the other hand, she has more belief in her powers than has the English gentlewoman, being less dominated by men. She believes herself highly capable, but the immigrant woman highly the reverse, and bases her main objection to the democratic franchise for women upon that belief. Because of her contempt for the immigrant she would restrict the male franchise if she could; that being impossible, she at least hopes to bar out the female. The American anti-suffragist uses all the old arguments about woman's sphere, physique, charm, maternity, inability, and the like, that have been disproved at each stage of the feminist movement, but under them all her failure to comprehend democracy lies at the bottom of her campaign. She makes great play, however, with the famous "woman's place" slogan, while enjoying that extra-domestic activity which is the gift of Feminism to her sex. I have met only two logical anti-suffrage women among those who have talked with me on woman's sphere. These ladies have assured me they keep no domestic servants, because every woman should re-

side in her own home, and not in another woman's. But as I have met these logicians on public platforms many miles away from the scene of their domestic careers, I have been forced to wonder how the household dinner was produced in their absence, and whether under such a dispensation the husband of an active anti-suffragist becomes a cook.

The fact is that the American anti is every whit as interested in the affairs of the world as the suffragist. She differs from the latter, not because she loves home more, but because she loves democracy and women less. She is an astute woman of the world, with money, leisure, organization and ability, and her campaign is not social at all, but purely political. In spite of her comparative ignorance of masculine politics, she is a more politically-minded woman than her English sister anti, who is only working for men and their idea of empire, while she is working against the people and their idea of democracy. Frivolous and coquettish women are to be found in the rank and file of the American anti-suffrage leagues, but their leaders are for the most part astute and cool politicians, whom one admires as executants but not as women. They lack the idealism and optimism which are so conspicuous in the American suffragists, and seem instead to have developed a certain bitterness, which is probably induced by a sense of defeat, and which makes them for the most part harder and less

womanly than the average suffragist, who is illuminated from within by her enthusiasm for an ever-growing cause. Such at least was the impression made upon me when, fresh from England, and not yet identified with American suffrage work, I endeavoured to view both camps with impartial eyes. There can be no question that the political training which anti-suffragists are now gaining for themselves, even though acquired in a bad cause as feminists believe it is, will be of great value to them when they have assisted the suffrage campaign to its nearing victory, and find themselves enjoying the responsibilities of voters. Having been in public life so long, many of these women will not care to sink back into the obscurity of domesticity, and, all breaches healed, will swell the numbers of trained and efficient women who will offer themselves for different forms of public work.

I make this prophecy with less hesitation since the national anti-suffrage association has publicly acclaimed the appointment of Dr. Katherine B. Davis to the head of the Department of Corrections of New York City. That endorsement was naturally startling to the public, which had been informed that women must remain in their sphere, and that the danger of voting was that it might lead to office holding. But it was in no wise out of harmony with the real philosophy of the anti-suffragists, which is merely

the denial of democracy. On this basis they may logically applaud the appointment of a gently-born woman to a public post, since it involves no technical extension of the democratic principle.

The anti-suffragists have some excuse for this failure to comprehend Democracy. There has been a great besmirching and belittling of her shield for many years past in America. Citizens born and bred here see the faulty features of the national Goddess, but have never stood sufficiently far away from her to perceive the grandeur of her whole form. It has been the fashion to vote her impotent, she who has never yet been given freedom to try her strength! But the day of her contemner is already past, and the tide has turned in favour of a Goddess free, not shackled. Indeed, to-day we seem to be witnessing Democracy's renaissance, and we should pity these blind ones who have not the vision to see the gleam of her opening wings.

But though they cannot see the vision, our organized reactionaries are shrewd enough to perceive that a campaign against the aroused Goddess has no hope of popularity. With a political acumen which I recognize but cannot admire, the leaders of these bodies have therefore recently inaugurated a policy known in England as that of the "red herring." The trail of the anti-suffragist leads to the anti-democrat, and whenever the public scents this fact it ceases to follow. Therefore is the red herring chosen—"militancy," "free love," what you will—and skilfully

drawn across the trail; and behold, the public quests after the new scent! Not for long, however. It soon discovers the deception and returns to the main trail, when another herring has to be provided. This political necessity explains the otherwise astonishing fact that a body of respectable and educated American women are willing, successively, to accuse another much larger and equally correct body of a passion for militancy, sex appeal (thus have the parades been indicted), and free love. To paraphrase a famous ejaculation, it is war, but it is not magnificent!

This is the main, and indeed the only, charge, that the feminist historian will lay at the door of the American anti-suffrage women. Their interest in public questions, their organization, their oratorical ability he will applaud. The service they render Feminism by promoting discussion and stimulating enthusiasm he will gratefully acknowledge, but their lack of sincerity and their reflections upon the morality of a great body of their fellow-citizens, he will regretfully deplore. This method of attack can do little harm to the suffragists, but it does do harm, I believe, to those who use it, and tends to lower them in the estimation of a large section of the American public. Indeed, could the public be persuaded to be anti-suffragist, it would be by such methods as these, which might make it feel that the type of woman who used them was not yet worthy of enfranchisement. However, the feminist historian will probably be able to record that the public forgave this campaign of calumnia-

tion, recognizing that it was dictated by the councils of despair. When a cause is all but won, its opponents, laying down the weapons of argument, betake them to those of abuse, and the winning side can readily gauge the nearness of its victory by the shrillness of the opposition.

In such a brief study of Feminism, by devoting a whole chapter to the contemporary opposition I may seem to have given it more space than its importance in the movement deserves. But it must always be remembered that the forces of reaction are hydra-headed, and that though the opponents of equal suffrage are already obviously beaten, precisely the same type of opposition will spring up to the next step in the woman's movement, just as it has arisen in the past to block each move in humanity's long upward struggle. The race carries with it not only the seeds of its own growth but of its own decay. Ignorance, superstition and narrowness lie deep in the hearts of all of us, legacies from our long past, and eternal vigilance is the price of their conquest. Feminists, happy in the onward march of the world's womanhood, can afford pity for these poor stragglers who cannot see the sun rising above the hills; but while they pity they must not scorn, for had they been stronger these stragglers would be less weak. It is the task of humanity's strong to lift the weak with them, and each girl left ignorant, each woman left petty or untrue, is a witness to a delay in the realization of the feminist ideal.

PART IV

THE FUTURE VISION

CHAPTER XVII

NO BURDENS

FEMINISTS, looking about the world to-day, see in sight the end of their long struggle for equality of opportunity. Enough has been done to show us that the rest must follow. In a very few generations the whole white race, at least, will have admitted the principle of equal educational, economic, and political opportunities for all, irrespective of class or sex. It will further have admitted that individual merit, and not sex, should be the basis of advancement and reward. The civilized world is rapidly learning to recognize that until the race is given the opportunity to advance *en bloc*, it can never advance very far, that until the sun shines upon all, we can never know what riches lie hidden in the human soil. That being so, there can be no fear of any retrogression for Feminism. Even if women were not awake to their wants, men would carry them forward to the door of opportunity on the wave of their own insurgent demands. For humanity's dispossessed are awake; women and workers, they must go forward together. It is true that, even as I write, the world is in the grip of the forces of

reaction, and women and workers alike are standing impotent while the creations of their bodies and hands are wrecked by the war-lust of a feudal oligarchy, dominating an over-masculinized race. No one can prophesy the extent of the ensuing disaster to humanity, but at least we may be sure that the lesson of this calamity will be taken to heart by the peoples of the world; that after this eruption of barbarism it will be increasingly difficult for a feudal group to sacrifice them to its avarice. If this cataclysm can cleanse the world of the anachronism of warfare, it may justify itself. Perhaps that is its purpose. The last European eruption attended democracy's birth; it may be that this one was needed to teach Demos his strength. In any event, we need not fear that the hard-won progress of humanity toward freedom and happiness can now be checked for more than a little while.

In thinking of the future of their cause, feminists see it inevitably linked with man's. For a moment of history women have had to struggle alone for the right to stand beside men in the labours and duties of this strange new world of ours. As soon as they do so, as soon as sex-domination has gone the way of class-domination, and humanity is free to follow its natural instead of its imposed leaders, the progress of men and women will merge into one harmonious movement, and humanity will rise on evenly-balanced pinions.

As the result of this balancing, this permeating of the race by equal parts of the male and female principle, feminists see a future of unparalleled growth and beauty. No one studying the record of past centuries can fail to realize that while the male spirit has been dominant the female has been checked. In art, literature, war, commerce, and religion, the thoughts and aspirations of men have triumphed over the needs and perceptions of women. We have never had the full benefit of whatever potential powers lie hidden in women's minds and hearts. The view is often put forward that women can express themselves to the full through their children. But even if every woman were a mother, and each mother permitted complete authority over her child, which has never been the case, it would remain true that if one generation never expressed itself save through the next, no generation would ever express itself fully. Racially speaking, both parents renew themselves through their children; socially speaking, both must also be free to express their human gifts through hand, eye, and brain.

This opportunity, complete freedom of growth by means of love, maternity, education, labour, service and responsibility, the near future undoubtedly holds for those women whose men already possess it. The ultimate future, we fervently believe, holds it for all men and all women. Meantime, what use are free

women to make of their new fortune? How is the future to be made more beautiful by their emergence?

In order that women may give to society the full value of their powers, they must not be unnaturally burdened—that is the first need. Hitherto, they have been more burdened than men, and their burdens have been mainly laid at the door of nature. Feminists deny that nature intended sex to be a burden, and they foretell a future in which it shall have ceased to be so.

Feminists see approaching a race of strong women. Already little American girls, with their short hair and "rompers," are growing about us as free to develop their bodies by healthy exercise as are boys. Already gymnasia and playgrounds are giving older girls the same freedom. Already sex-hygiene is being taught, and the clothing of young girls has never been as loose and light as it is to-day. But that is not all. Thanks largely to the women doctors, we are beginning to recognize that the seasonal disturbance of the woman's physique is a perfectly normal function which, if rightly observed and understood, need not detract from her full healthfulness and efficiency. The old idea that—as Mrs. Gilman puts it—"womanhood was merely a disease," is rapidly giving place to saner councils. We are learning that, if girls are unhealthy, it is our fault, and not the fault of nature,

which certainly did not create a race half healthy and half invalid.

Moreover, we begin to see that nature never intended the bearing of children to be a cause of ill-health and extended suffering to women. In this matter we have strayed surprisingly far from the normal, particularly in puritan countries. The mass of mothers have been allowed to exhaust themselves before childbirth with monotonous and ugly toil, in kitchen or in workshop, rarely in the open air. The minority have been swathed in false delicacy, secluded from the light of day, and weakened by excessive petting and solicitude. One class has never been allowed to "give way" until the end, the other has been forced to do so from the beginning. The results of both methods have been injurious alike to mother and child.

In these matters an awakened and free womanhood can speedily work a change. Laws and regulations must enable the workingwoman to obtain a suitable period of rest before and after childbirth, without undue financial loss. As healthy births are the first need of the race, they must be encouraged by society, and motherhood must not be taxed and penalized as it is to-day. Sufficient hospital accommodation must be provided for all women whose homes fall below a certain standard of comfort. Women must be so trained from young girlhood that they are muscularly

fitted for maternity, and the public standards of comeliness must be revised so that pregnancy is no longer a period of seclusion and embarrassment. As for the suffering of childbirth itself, science has already reduced it, and from Germany come reports of a new anæsthetic which, without danger, eliminates it altogether. It is reasonable to hope that such alleviations will ultimately be within the reach of all, and that the weight of fear and horror may be quite lifted from women's anticipation of their supreme achievement. With proper freedom of mind and body, proper development and wise guidance, feminists believe that the physical burden of womanhood can be so lessened as to become negligible. They point to the animal world, where sex is so slight a physical handicap to the female, and they believe that what nature has done for animals, nature and science can do for humans. They point to the peasant women of Europe, deep-chested and strong-backed, working in the fields beside their men, with their children at their skirts, and they say that civilization can and must temper such strength to fineness, not to attenuation. When reactionaries speak of the "burden" of maternity, feminists reply that normal motherhood should impose the lightest burden while bestowing the highest privilege. They believe that it is just such doctrines as those held by the reactionaries which have made of nature's strong and fecund

woman often but a frail and barren toy, and that when an anti-feminist, in the name of eugenics, implores women to "go back to their homes, their husbands, *and their pets*," she is deeply injuring the cause she desires to serve. The first burden to be lifted from women is the idea that their sex entails one, and this idea the feminist movement, with its health, optimism, and common-sense, is rapidly helping to destroy.

While putting their own temple of health in order, feminists do not forget their brothers. Though much of the poor health of women can be traced to wrong ideas, training, and environment, a part is also the result of the so-called "social evil," which every force of Feminism will help to destroy. It is the passionate conviction of women that this evil, upon which Nature has set the terrible seal of her condemnation, is *not* "necessary," and they mean to fight it with all the strength of their awakened and united brains and hearts. This burden of prostitution, which saps the life of women in every class, taking hideous toll of their young daughters, their unborn children, their health, happiness and pride, is the next which the Feminism of the future, working with and through the new man, will at last lift from the shoulders of women.

Women must be freed from the multiplicity of petty tasks. To-day in America only one woman in six-

teen keeps a servant, almost all the others being cook, nursemaid, housemaid, caterer, and mender in one, whether or not they have aptitude for any, or all, of these employments. Households are absurdly elaborate. Embroidery cumbers the linen, lace the pillows, and silver the sideboards of brides who expect to do their own housework. The burden of ostentation is one which an enlightened womanhood will quickly shake off. Households must be simplified, and the mechanical labour of cooking, cleaning, and repairing must be enormously reduced. Much has been done by the installation of modern appliances, but much remains to do. The problem of the economical production of pleasant and nutritious food has to be solved through some form of collective enterprise, so that women occupied with young children, or with professions, may not have the spectre of the dining-table continually before their eyes. Women must be free to specialize in their homes as well as out. If they desire to absorb themselves in their children, the dishes must not interfere; if they desire their husbands' companionship, the stove must not forbid. Feminists do not say that every woman must cease to be a general houseworker. They merely hold that society must be so organized that women of all classes who *desire* to specialize within the home or out may do so. It must not be forgotten that the old handicrafts of the home were productive and creative,

while modern housework is almost purely mechanical and demands not imagination but machinery. The only art left in the home, outside of the nursery, is cooking. If a woman desires to specialize in cooking, well and good, but the fact that she is a wife and mother must not necessarily oblige her to do so. Household life must be more mobile and less complex. Experts must handle much of the buying and cooking of food in cities, just as they already handle part of our cleaning and dispose of our refuse. Electrical appliances must further reduce waste of force. All this must occur in order that women may devote themselves to their chosen vocations or interests, inside the home or out. It may encourage idleness in some women, but it will encourage efficiency in many more. Homes will become places of rest and beauty for their occupants, and the burden of pettiness will be lifted from the domestic cares of women.

Last must go the burden of restricted choice in love. The phrase of Tennyson's farmer, "I don't say marry for money, but go where money is," must cease to have significance. With the growing economic independence of women will come enormously increased facilities for early marriages. The long waiting, the heartbreaking delays that so often accompany the courtship of the middle class, will be largely eliminated. To-day a young married professional or business man is haunted by the continual fear of los-

ing his position, knowing that the day he does so the sole family source of supply ceases. Often he misses opportunities for advancement because he dare not imperil this supply for an hour.

Where the wife is even intermittently productive, this fear is somewhat lifted, and a man's family ceases to be a millstone round the neck of his ambition. When the crushing burden of parasitism is lifted from women, when they know that they can afford to marry poor men, who can in turn afford to marry them, we may hope that love will come into his kingdom.

Only those things are burdens which interfere with growth, development, and truth. Responsibilities are not burdens, for they build character; motherhood is not a burden, but a joy. Work is not a burden, but is humanity's greatest avenue of expression. But work must be freely chosen, and must be performed under suitable conditions, or it becomes mere drudgery. The artificial restrictions which have been thrown about the work of women by laws, customs, and traditions, constitute an intolerable injustice to half the race. There is no burden greater than that of unsuitable and uncongenial toil, yet the great mass of women have never been free to make even the smallest choice of a vocation. The choice open to the majority of men is small enough, but it is infinitely wide in comparison with women's. In this matter of fitting

the man to the task humanity's methods are still archaic, though changing rapidly for the better. Employers of labour are beginning to consider their men as individuals, not as machines, and trying their capacities in different branches of work till they find the one that fits. In the upper classes, traditional occupations tend to disappear—because a man is a gentleman it is no longer necessary for him to limit himself to the vocation of arms, the law, or the church. Yet while the infinite variety of men's minds and talents are being recognized, the majority of people still cling to the illusion that all women can, or should, succeed in the same trade, that of housework. This is to relegate women to the slave status, for the real difference between slavery and freedom is the difference between compulsion and choice in the affairs of one's life. When women are educated in mind and body, when they have learnt to renounce the tyranny of fashion and display, when they are free to choose their work and their mates, all artificial burdens will be lifted from them, and for the first time in history the whole sex will begin to live.

It will be seen that these burdens divide themselves into two kinds, those that are special to women, and those that they share with their brothers. As the disabilities connected with the work of women outside their homes are also felt by men throughout the working classes, it is inevitable that at this point the

demands of Feminism should also be the demands of labour. It would be futile to attempt to lift the burdens from women's shoulders, while leaving the backs of men bowed. It would be ignoble to smooth the path of professional women, while leaving the labouring woman's blocked. Modern Feminism, asking nothing less than the freeing of all women from artificial hindrances to growth, pledges itself to the whole trend of democratic reform. If it requires an eight-hour day for women, for instance, it must equally require it for men, or the law would become a serious check on women's earning capacity. So that it becomes impossible for those not enlisted in the cause of labour to be feminists in the truest sense, and it is more than ever difficult for a reactionary in politics to endorse the woman's cause. As women enter into ever-widening fields of labour, their needs become daily more apparent, and their kinship to their brother-workers ever closer. As Feminism breaks down the barriers of class between woman and woman, and draws rich and poor into the sympathy of a common cause, the needs of the workers become more apparent to the wealthy, and it is increasingly obvious to all that the woman's movement is not only racially and spiritually progressive, but politically and socially progressive also.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE NEW MAN

In May, 1911, when the first large Suffrage Parade marched in New York City, ninety men, carrying the banner of the State Men's League for Woman Suffrage, marched with it. All the way down Fifth Avenue these men were laughed at by the male crowds that blocked the curbs. Cat-calls, jeers and whistles greeted them, they were jostled and insulted, sneered at and ridiculed. But they kept on, and marched into Union Square quite undisturbed by their ordeal, to find the massed ranks of the procession waiting for them. I think the reward of their knightliness came to the ninety then, when they heard their greeting from the women for whose cause they marched. If any in the onlooking crowd had feared that the woman's movement implied sex antagonism, that greeting would have undeceived him.

Such men's leagues already existed in England, and since then have been founded in all parts of America, and in many other countries, so that ten nations are now represented in the International Men's League for Woman Suffrage. Lists of the officers of these

leagues yield us, properly enough, hardly any army or navy men, but a rich harvest of lawyers, doctors, clergy and business men of the progressive type. Socialists, prohibitionists, and organized labour do not need representation there, being already pledged to the woman's cause. It is in these classes, the intellectuals, moralists, progressives, and the workers, that the New Man is developing.

At present in all the world there are only a few new men. Their numbers are increasing yearly, but still fall far short of the number of new women, particularly in the older countries. But every son born to a feminist, and every man married to one, has an opportunity to develop into the new type.

The new man is a human being before he is a male, and counts a woman human before female. This does not sound revolutionary, but it is. Men have always been human in their relation to each other, but toward women they have in the past been almost entirely male. That is to say, they have been desirous, which is good, dominating, which is bad, protecting, which is chiefly good, jealous, which is wholly bad, admiring, which is pleasant, flattering, which is belittling; they have been masters, which is bad for them, and slaves, which is bad for women. They have persisted in seeing women only in relation to themselves, never as separate individuals. All laws and customs demonstrate this tendency of theirs so clearly as to make

anything more than mention of it superfluous. The new man has to unlearn these deep-rooted habits and instincts of his sex. He has to tear down this ancient edifice and build upon its site a mansion so different from the old that his architectural knowledge may well falter. And he is doing it—that is the great fact that women have to be thankful for to-day. Certain races and classes of men are changing their basic attitude toward women with encouraging facility, and the fact that they have developed so far in the few years that women have had education and comparative liberty augurs nobly for the future of their sex.

It has been supposed that if men decrease in masculinity, they will fail in manliness. War has been upheld as valuable in keeping the race virile. As it continually reduces the finest stocks and leaves only the weakly to father the next generation this is obviously an illusion. Virility can be best retained by avoiding a reversion to barbarity. The American nation to-day shows less of the war spirit than probably any other white race. American men of this generation are frankly not interested in war, but a lack of virility is the last charge that could be sustained against them. They are probably in some respects the most virile race of men in the world. True, they have deflected the male fighting instinct into the field of commercial competition, and this is itself a form of warfare, but it is certainly less directly brutal than the older variety.

The important fact for women to realise is that this nation, which is turning more and more from the genius of warfare to that of peace, is also the nation where the new man is most rapidly developing. The doctrine that might is right, and that physical domination is in itself admirable, the doctrine in effect of the German governing class, is subversive of all progress for women, and of all spiritual progress for men. The lesson becomes clear when we compare the respective position of German and American women to-day.

Every male instinct of domination and sovereignty has to be bred out of the individual before he can attain the status of the new man, and be a fit mate for the new woman. He has to understand deeply that the woman is half of the human whole, and that there can be no more question of either sex dominating the other than of one half of a circle preponderating over the other half. When he realizes this fundamental equality of the sexes, and not before, he begins to understand that women, having as much humanity as men, need equal freedom for its development.

Whether the old type of man regarded woman as an angel or a toy, it was equally in her relation to himself that he so held her. If an angel, she ministered to him, if a plaything, she amused him. The toy was his and it was he who sat under the warmth of the angel's wings. But the new man knows naught of "woman."

He knows *women*, some intimately, the rest as friends and acquaintances—grave and gay, intelligent or dull, strong and weak, successful or otherwise. They are in a profession or business like himself, or they are engaged in the multifold vocation of housewife and mother. Whoever or whatever they may be they are people, and he likes or dislikes them for their personal qualities of mind and heart, and endeavours to free himself from continual inner consciousness of their sex. He may not succeed. Some men are so constituted temperamentally as to be almost incessantly conscious of sex, and this is no more their fault than if they were born with defective sight. One supposes that it will be many a thousand years before the whole race has learnt the finest use to which to put its superabundant sex energy. Meantime the measure of the highly sexed man may be gauged by his attitude toward his own instincts. The old-fashioned type is content to divide women into two classes—those who must be respected, and those who need not be—and to satisfy his affections through the former and his desires through the latter. The new man, whatever his temperament, is no longer willing to gratify it at the expense of any woman or class of women. He may still permit himself—as his fathers have before him—more sexual experience than the church or law allows him, but at least he wins it in a spirit of adventure, not of barter. And having won the adventure he does

not condemn his partner in it. Moreover, if through this adventure he finds himself the father of a child born outside the law, he does not use that fact as an excuse for allowing it also to be born outside his care and protection. In a word, the man of superabundant temperament, if he is of the new order, may be no more continent than he of the old, but to his incontinence he does not add the arts of the merchant, the liar, or the cheat. He plays fair with women, even in love. He also finds in women other planes of contact besides the sexual, even though that may predominate. The problem of the naturally polygamous man is one of great importance to feminists, and I shall endeavour to outline their views on it in my chapter on Love.

Meanwhile there remains the man who is possessed of no more temperament than is convenient, he to whom monogamy comes easily. Under the old régime this man concentrated his sex-life upon his wife and obtained almost all companionship from men. But he of the new is free to find in many women friendship, companionship and cooperation, regarding them as I have said preëminently as people rather than as females. Beyond this he makes, if he chooses wisely, such a mating as has hardly been possible between primitive pioneer days and our own time.

The new man of the faithful monogamous type increasingly found in the enlightened middle class, seeks

to marry a woman as intelligent, broad-minded and educated as himself. Whatever the monetary arrangements between them, he looks upon the partnership as equal, and if his wife has no means, and is not an earner, he so arranges his finances that a portion of his income comes automatically to her in return for her household labours. He would feel his own dignity impaired if his wife were in any sense a pensioner upon his bounty.

As marriage, to the new man, is an equal partnership, so the responsibilities it entails are equally shared. He no more dreams of arrogating to himself a greater control over his children, for instance, than his wife possesses, than he would expect the vote of one shareholder in an enterprise to carry greater weight than that of another holder of an equal number of shares. If a disagreement arises between the partners in regard to, let us say, the education of a child, the new man no more takes the final decision upon himself than one partner in a firm would take action without the agreement of the other partner. He never assumes that the final decision rests with him merely by virtue of his sex, because he knows that it is only force, physical or financial, which gives him the power to dictate, and he is an advocate rather of the Hague tribunal than of armaments. On the other hand, he does not turn over these parental decisions to his wife out of a mistaken estimate of the domestic division of

labour, but seeks to perform his full half of such duties, neither more nor less.

Marrying thus a woman his equal in education and responsibility, he can give her a love and comradeship infinitely deeper than the tolerant and protecting tenderness which was all the old-fashioned type of man usually felt called upon to bestow, or that the old-fashioned woman was often able to call forth. Loving his chosen mate as whole-heartedly as he is able to do, the new man of this type finds it easy to give to other women that unselfconscious friendliness of which I have spoken, and which feminists so much desire from men as a class. The new woman is so tired of the old-fashioned man's preoccupation with her sex that she hails the advent of the new man, with his sincere and unforced respect for women, his friendliness, and his lack of either condescension or flattery, with inexpressible relief.

The average Frenchman, in my observation, is never unconscious of a woman, but is always ready to accept her as his mental equal. The average Englishman is rarely unconscious of her, and, while exacting intelligence, is as rarely ready to accept her as an equal. The average American is least conscious in the presence of a woman, is prepared to be indulgent to her should she prove herself a fool, but is equally prepared to concede her ability should she prove otherwise. The new man in England exacts a great deal from his

wife, while being prepared to give in equal measure. The new man in America is prepared to give all, equality, comradeship, freedom, love, but he has not yet, perhaps, fully realized that it is his duty to demand all in return. He is still inclined, where women are concerned, to applaud the second-best as perfection; he has not yet quite outgrown his father's excess of chivalrous indulgence. He is learning, however, to demand more, as women are learning to give more. He himself is perhaps giving more than any other man in the world to-day, due allowance being made for the limitations of his circumstances. Over-worked and over-specialized, the new man in America cannot develop those subtler phases of love and companionship which demand peace and beauty for their setting, and which are only possible where there is some leisure and a certain width of cultivation. Realising this, feminists are bound to be interested in any reform movements which tend to give the worker more leisure and a wider field of interests. Quite apart from humanitarian reasons, the belief of feminists in the companionship of the sexes enjoins their demand for those reforms which will bring the leisure that makes such companionship possible. New men and new women are at one in their belief in some work for all, and not too much for any.

The new man encourages his wife to follow her profession or calling after marriage if she desires to do so. Proud of her ability, he even urges her not to abandon

her career on his behalf. He rejoices in her independence, while ready to take upon himself the full economic burden when child-bearing debars her from work. If she wishes—for business or other reasons—to retain her own name after marriage, he sees no objection to her doing so. He considers that man of very paltry spirit who demands any sacrifice of ambition or interests from his wife which he is not prepared to make himself; conversely, where he is willing to make sacrifices for the sake of his family, he is not ashamed to ask his mate to do the same. He has equal contempt for the man who marries for money and for him whose pride forbids him to marry without it. He is just to his wife, and expects justice from her; he is reasonable, and expects reason from her as from himself. He does not question her private affairs or actions, nor does he expect that she should question his. He asks nothing as a right, everything as a gift. He looks upon marriage as a mutual strengthening, not as a mutual coercion. He has at once outgrown the domineering selfishness of the old European school and the cosseting false sentiment of the modern American husband. Tolerant toward all those at a different stage of development from his own, he yet holds both himself and his wife to a very high standard of achievement. For he recognizes that the whole relationship of the sexes is undergoing radical scrutiny, criticism, and modification in the present generation, and that

the future development of human progress and happiness depend much upon how enlightened men and women bear themselves in the sex relations to-day.

Modern man is an explorer. Like a second Adam he is faced with the presence of a newly-created being, and with the problem of how to deal with her. If he confronts her with arrogance, misunderstanding and bigotry, he brings upon himself the danger of a rebellion such as we have seen in England, by which his task of comprehending her is seriously retarded. If, as the new man is doing, he faces her problems with sympathy, respect and friendliness, he wins for himself and the race a great reward—for, together with deep gratitude, she can give him the friendship of an equal, the faith of a comrade, the love of a true mate, and the joy of a conscious and enlightened parenthood. While the old-fashioned man continues to obtain from women the superficial graces he demands, the new man gives the highest, asks the highest in return, and wins it.

CHAPTER XIX

LOVE

WHEN everything else has been said and written about life, when conquest, learning, discovery, trade, science, ambition and success have taken their places in the great phantasmagoria, there remains love, which is all that we know of what may be immortal in life itself. Behind the solid facts of existence, around them and above them, play the wings of love, giving colour and soul to what would otherwise be but a stolid pilgrimage through squalours innumerable, disappointments inevitable, and a bruising contact with material forces. Love, moving majestic over the world, gathers under her thousand-gleaming pinions all that is lovely, all that is gracious, all that is pitiful and holy in humanity. Under her shadow the little child who weeps for his hurt puppy, the painter who laughs with joy of his masterpiece, and the soldier who dies, smiling, for his country, are alike symbols of that which is divine in us.

Of all forms of love that for humanity is the noblest, that of the mother for her child is the tenderest, and that of the man and the woman is the most magical.

Any cause of humanity's which ignored or belittled this, or any other phase of love, would inevitably fail, for it would be built upon outward seeming instead of inward force. It is a commonplace that the artist creates for love of his work, the patriot fights for love of his country, and the mother labours for love of her child. But lovers love, neither for their own sakes nor for each other's, but for the sake of love alone. They are seeking no material good, however lofty, and are conscious of the urge of no lesser creative force than that of life itself, which impels them to that union of their joint halves which means completion and new life to come. Therefore mate-love, while the most physical, is also the most mystic of forces; it is the one which lifts man into some knowledge of super-humanity; it is the only thing that seems greater than he, the only thing that even appears to give him the victory over death. Mate-love lies at the root of religion, for through it in the long primæval ages man must have developed his imagination, and through his imagination his soul.

All this is felt by those to whom life is something more than a series of physical sensations or mental experiences. But there are a great many for whom the mystic inner meaning of life has no appeal, and I think the mistake that is made in all controversies about love is that each faction seeks to impose its view on the other, regardless of whether that other is tem-

peramentally equipped to comprehend it. Thus persons of passionate senses insist on the physical joy of love and regard those who minimize it as narrow and half-sexed, while others to whom the physical union is little and the mental or spiritual all-important, look down upon these as sensualists on a lower plane of development. There is no subject wherein the cleavage of point of view is deeper than this of love, and none perhaps on which people judge others so readily, or with such unconscious lack of fairness. The very word "moral" has been narrowed from its original meaning to become a decoration bestowed on men and women of continent habits, whereas in truth a continent man who lacks temptation to be anything else may be a perfect monster of immorality in every other respect, while a woman whose temperament has urged her into an irregular union may be obeying her own inner law, and may be, in all but conventional reputation, a highly moral person. Indeed so narrowly has this word been used that it has fallen into some disrepute, and there are many reputable but unbigoted circles where the adjective is used rather to condemn puritanism than to praise virtue. In feminist circles, no less than in others, I have found this cleavage in the point of view toward sexual love, and the division is based not so much upon religion, class, or race, as upon temperament.

I have said elsewhere that modern feminists can be

divided into two groups, those who minimize the importance of sex, and those who maximize it. It follows that the first group also minimizes the importance of sex love, while to the second it is the fundamental fact of life. In the early days of Feminism it was necessary to make a firm stand against Victorian sentimentality, and unquestionably the early leaders, in their endeavour to overcome this danger to women, armed themselves and their followers with a certain lonely self-sufficiency. Those days are passed, however, and feminists now face the problem of love unhampered either by the old belief that it was "woman's whole existence," or by the newer prejudice against it as a weakness which puts women at a disadvantage.

As each human heart is different, I suppose no two people are ever utterly at one in their estimate of love, but I think there are certain bases of agreement at which most modern feminists have arrived, and certain distinct hopes which they share for the future.

Feminists believe that life-long union with one mate is the highest ideal of love, but they also believe that this union must be based on a love comprising physical, mental and spiritual attributes, if it is to endure. They do not believe that a marriage held together for worldly considerations after all three of these attributes of love have flown is a decent or reputable marriage, or that a house sheltering such a ménage is a fit dwelling-place for children. Therefore feminists

believe in divorce, and they believe in it as the dignified dissolution of a partnership which has failed, not as a punishment inflicted by the innocent upon the guilty. It follows that most feminists, as apart from suffragists, believe in a thorough reform of the divorce laws, making the dissolution of the marriage bond simple, dignified, and reputable, and they believe that such a reform will bring about a heightening, and not a lessening, of sexual morality.

Feminists as a whole are marked by a contempt for shams, in love as in all else. If marriage is to be a business or social partnership, that estimation of it must be clearly stated and accepted, as it is to some extent in France. But if marriage is, as Americans in particular hold it, preëminently a partnership of loving comrades, then when this love and comradeship die the compact is thereby broken beyond patching. Feminists are inclined to believe that marriages should be less lightly entered into than at present, and more easily terminated.

The majority of highly developed people are undoubtedly monogamous in their aspirations, if not always in their instincts. But one cannot deny that there is a majority of men, and a very small minority of women, who have not yet developed out of the polygynous and polyandric stage. Many of these practise "free" unions secretly and a few openly, and they suffer the ban of society not to the degree in

which they break its law, but merely to the extent of their failure to wear its mask. The great majority of these people, all the frivolous or debased of the type, those who hold sex cheaply, Lotharios, coquettes and the like, are of course anti-feminists. A few are feminists, those who, temperamentally unsuited to monogamy, despise the hypocrisy that cloaks conventional morality, and prefer to advocate openly the loosening of the legal restrictions on sexual experience, rather than join the ranks of the Pharisees.

From this type we get what talk of free love is heard among certain extreme feminists. What it means is not that these people are less idealistic about love, but that their idealism is of a different order from that of the majority. They believe so fervently the obvious truism that people cannot be legislated into morality that they are inclined to think of law, not as supplementing morality, but as interfering with it. They can endure no atmosphere of coercion about the great adventure of love, and if a marriage fails they are apt to blame the legalities which surround it, for the calamity, rather than the faulty nature of the love which created it. People who inveigh against monogamy—whether anti-feminists or feminists, whether the old-fashioned rake or the modern magazine-anarchist—are those who find its standards difficult of attainment. They are the people who cannot concentrate their life-forces, but must scatter them.

They are the seekers and explorers in the world of love, those who can never be satisfied with the immediate prospect because of the lure of the horizon—and they are rarely happy. Those feminist women who are also mothers, and know how disruptive this seeking, scattering quality is to the law of growth involved in parenthood, feel deeply sorry for this type of nature, but where they have any wide knowledge of the complex qualities of humanity they do not dare adopt the attitude of judge. They realize that there are visionaries among us who so desire perfection in love as never to be satisfied, and that those who fail to obey man's law are not always immoral, but are sometimes striving, however confusedly, to find God's. Let me not be misunderstood. Faithful monogamy must ever be woman's standard in love, because only in its still certainty can she fitly prepare and keep the place for her child. Feminists merely feel that the greatest sin against love, and therefore against morality, is not irregularity, but hypocrisy, and not a "free" union, but a lustful one. They hold George Eliot moral, and the woman who sells love, in or out of marriage, deeply immoral.

It is often complained that the discovery of scientific means for the prevention of conception is a direct encouragement to immorality in women. Most feminists do not agree with this view. They believe there is no true morality where there is no free choice.

Hitherto conventional morality has been imposed upon women by the public acknowledgment nature forced them to make of their act. To-day, in the educated class at least, women almost equally with men can, if they choose, escape the consequences of their conduct. The result is that in future we shall have from women not an enforced but a spontaneous morality, which cannot fail to be of spiritual benefit to the race.

Now-a-days one occasionally hears talk of trial marriages. I do not myself believe that they will ever come into general existence, because I believe that the great majority of women, if they love a man well enough to live with him, will always love him well enough to desire a child by him, and that once there is a child the state is involved in the marriage, which then becomes a social contract. My own view is that divorce without detriment to the standing of either party is the solution towards which we are drawing, and I find that view shared by the great mass of feminists with whose words or writings I have come in contact. But if—which I do not believe—we are to be faced with a choice between trial marriages and "free love" on the one hand, and prostitution on the other, then I unhesitatingly pronounce in favour of the former; and so I believe would all clean-minded women who were dowered with any medical knowledge, pity, or imagination.

Apart from the advocates of trial marriages, we have the little groups of free love propagandists already referred to. A recently published book by Miss Mary Austin, "Love and the Soul Maker," deals with their theories much more thoroughly and conclusively than I could hope to do in this brief chapter. Miss Austin is an advanced feminist, but she comprehends the fallacy of free love quite as completely as could the most self-righteous reactionary. The contradiction in terms involved in the phrase is obvious. By the very nature of love, it can never be free. Indifference can be free, but not love. Even were there no laws, even had the mating produced no child, the very fact that two people love and give themselves to each other creates instantly a host of subtleties of consideration, obligation, pity, tenderness, mutual interest, and habit, harder to break than the stoutest chain. This fact was shown in the novel "Sapho;" it was shown with the most biting realism by Brieux in his play "Les Hannetons," in which the hero finds it more difficult to divest himself of his mistress than it would have been had they been married. The laws of marriage are merely the social sanction given to an inward tie which is powerful by reason of nature and not usage. When we talk of freedom in love we run athwart the great natural law of exchange which decrees that nothing can be obtained save at a price. Once a man loves, or receives love, he puts

himself under obligations which he cannot evade, and if he successfully shirks payment of the price, the uttermost return will most surely be exacted from some other, who will be the vicarious sacrifice to his evasion.

Such are the views of the vast majority of feminist women to-day on love and marriage, as I have found them. Women are almost entirely united in their belief in the single standard of morals between the sexes, and there are very few who believe that this standard should be other than the purest. Occasionally one meets a woman who believes that the so-called "experiences" common to men are desirable for women in the interest of self-development, but such a woman is a rare exception. Toward her the attitude of typical feminists would be that they are not the keepers of their neighbours' consciences, and can have nothing to say to the woman who thinks her nature demands a variety of sex-experience, save to conjure her not to be a pirate—not to attain her adventures at the expense of any man, any child, or any other woman.

Feminists will point out to this free lance that experience is as wide as the universe, and that a woman loving one man deeply, faithfully, and permanently has experienced much that she who loves many temporarily can never hope to know. Depth can be measured as far as width, and none knows how far

beyond measurement either may reach. The free lance has no excess of experience to show over that of the monogamous woman, only a different, and we think far inferior, quality of knowledge.

Feminists believe that in our present stage of development women understand love more deeply than men. But they look to a future in which men may follow women along this road of discovery, just as women have followed men along the road of knowledge of material things. The French philosopher Tarde has suggested that the genius of man will turn to the perfecting of love after it has died down in the fields of warfare and commerce. The hope is not impossible of fulfilment. Man, busied with his eternal conquest of the material world, has through most of recorded history treated love as an episode. But when he has answered all the riddles and conquered all the tasks of the physical world about him, he may readily turn to the life within for his ultimate and deepest exploration. There, at the gateway, he will find her who has waited for him down the centuries, the woman "whom he has wedded but has never won." Love, so infinitely mysterious, so deep in its physical anchorage and so high in its spiritual aspiration, so shy, so aloof and yet so marvellously near, may well be a quest worthy of his explorer's skill. When he learns to know the soul of woman he will have attained the key to his own, and then perhaps

love may unlock the door to a race beautiful and wise beyond our dreams, which shall in the æons to come carry us as far beyond the pitiful limitations of to-day as we have been carried beyond the tiny sponge-like life of the world's beginnings. This at least is what some women dream when, holding love to them as a talisman, they search the future's mists.

CHAPTER XX

THE AGE OF THE CHILD

THE age of Feminism is also the age of the child. The qualms of the timorous should be allayed by this fact, which proves that women, in gaining in humanity, do not lose in womanliness. A time of reform is also a time of extremes, and I admit the existence of individual women who, in their effort to gain the world, have foresworn the cradle. But the reaction from this singlemindedness has been rapid, and the tendency among feminists to-day, particularly in Germany and America, is to elevate the child into a position of domination over the other two parts of nature's trilogy. Indeed, the insistence upon motherhood and child-care in the writings and speeches of leading feminists is sometimes so intense as almost to endanger the claims of husband and father.

The child is of course nature's last, and therefore most important, work. Our first duty is to him, because in him lies the future of the race. Since women have become comparatively free and educated this truth has been increasingly clear to them, and they approach their maternal responsibilities from an infi-

nitely more enlightened standpoint than was possible in the days of their bondage. In the eighteenth century, the age of woman's "femininity," not only were wet-nurses in universal use, but the women of the upper classes commonly left their children in the care of peasant foster-parents on their property, or in a neighbouring village, for the whole of the first few years of their lives. Were this fact more widely known we should not hear so much of the decline in maternal care imagined to exist in our day. Indeed it is safe to say that there has never been a time in which the child has received more than a fraction of the earnest care of mind and body bestowed on him by the educated mothers of this generation. His clothes are designed for his comfort instead of his mother's pride, his infant utterances are recorded, his weight and height registered, his food analyzed, his rooms are specially designed and his furniture is specially built for him. Toys and books are chosen with infinite care, Montessori and kindergarten classes are provided, and music and harmony are taught him by the most scientific methods. He lives in the open air, sleeps on a porch, and runs barefoot in the summer. Nothing that can be taught a child is omitted by our zealous mothers; even sexual hygiene is not forgotten.

All this is highly praiseworthy as an example of the devotion to duty exhibited by the new woman. Like every other pioneer, however, this enthusiast in child-

culture lays herself open to new dangers, even as she surmounts the old. In America, in particular, under the influence of educationalists and the national love of efficiency, she is in danger of making maternal duty a fetish to which she sacrifices her own individuality, her child's freedom, her husband's companionship, and his share in the society of his children.

The importance of the child is paramount, but it is gravely unwise to allow him to know it. In many fine modern American households the mother is specialized as a nurse-maid and governess to such an extent that the child views her as a kind of authoritative slave to be confidently called on night and day, while his father is a distant being whose function is to preside over a world called "business," to bring home presents, and occasionally to exert a sporadic authority. In England a wife usually puts her husband before her children, but in America the order is unquestionably reversed. The result is a triple danger. The child becomes egotistical, the mother's horizon becomes too narrow, and the companionship between the parents is seriously curtailed. Consequently, by the time the child is of age for school life, with its friendships and independent interests, he is too apt to consider his parents mere institutions provided for his convenience. The mother, specialized for the nursery, finds it difficult to resume her old interests. The father, long used to a household in which he is of secondary importance, has provided

himself with hobbies and interests outside his home, and the mate-life of the couple, broken by years of habit, is renewed no more readily than are the mother's old-time vocations.

This, of course, is painting the picture at its darkest, but I have done so merely to show the direction in which the modern apotheosis of the child may become dangerous. The child must have the best we can give; that is obvious. The question that feminists are asking themselves is, in what does the best consist? At which period of a child's life, after weaning, is his mother's companionship most valuable to him, and in what should that companionship consist? How far should the child dominate the domestic trilogy, and where they come into competition, as they must, how far should mother-love weigh against mate-love?

Toward these, as toward other problems of the individual, feminists do not adopt the attitude of judges, but rather of experimenters. There is naturally a wide diversity of opinion among them on these points, based upon individual experience and predilection, as well as observation. The whole science of expert child-care is so young that women are still following it with all the enthusiasm of explorers. Opinions differ as much between one country and another as between one individual and another. But on the whole I should say that indications point to two future lines of endeavour among enlightened women. One will bring about the

re-emergence of the father as a prime factor in the life of the child; the other will insist on the value of the mother in the *later* stages of childhood.

For the modern woman has to weigh values carefully. She may prefer to devote herself to her child in infancy, to her child in adolescence, to her husband, or to her vocation. But she cannot devote herself *exclusively* to any one of these without neglect of the others. If for a period of, say, ten years she performs the whole of the mechanical and other work of the nursery for several children, she has lost ten years of growth in knowledge of the outside world, of books, art, travel, or whatever it was in which she was formerly engaged. She cannot conceivably be the same interesting and stimulating companion to an adolescent boy or girl that she could be, had she performed only a part of the work of the nursery and devoted the remainder of her time to outside interests. Similarly, though she may regain much lost ground, she can never be to her husband the full and tried companion of his leisure that she might have been without her decade-long withdrawal into the nursery.

On the other hand, the modern woman may apportion her time, giving some to her husband and some to professional work, study, or recreation. In this case she must add to her maternal labours the assistance of a nurse, governess, Montessori school, or crèche, according to circumstance. So doing, she

cannot have all the joy of daily and hourly companionship with the growing body and mind of her little child. She cannot enjoy the rather selfish delight of her baby's exclusive love; she must share his devotion with others. Conversely, she will escape the continual nervous strain imposed by the unremitting care, night and day, of young children, which reacts in its turn so harmfully upon them. Beyond this gain lies the salient advantage of the mother's division of activities, accruing to the child in the period of adolescence.

At the average marrying age of, say, twenty-five, the modern girl cannot be a broad and far-sighted woman of the world. After ten or fifteen years of absorption in the nursery the girl will have developed the tenderness and probably the patience of mature womanhood, but not its knowledge and wide experience. Her elder children going through high-school on their way to college or work, will find her sweet and loving, but just a little old-fashioned, a trifle narrow perhaps, a little removed from the broad currents of the world's thought. She will have become "dear old mother," and her saws will be only half regarded, her admonitions readily forgotten. Adolescence, the most mysterious and dangerous of ages, will then find the child in possession of a mother, dear, but not inspiring, loving, but not arresting. We have only to divest ourselves of sentiment, and dispassionately regard any

home of our acquaintance where the mother has thus concentrated herself on her children, to see her influence waning in favour of the hitherto little-known father, or the teacher or friend who has captured the child's growing imagination.

But let the mother have sacrificed her longing for the sole physical care of the little child in favour of the mental guidance of his later years; let her have continued her pre-matrimonial profession, kept up with her husband's hobbies, or taken a holiday occasonally without her little brood, and the result will be different indeed. The girl and boy of fourteen and upwards will find in their mother a companion cognizant of all that broader life which they begin to scan so eagerly. They will turn to her sure of something more than tenderness; she can give them knowledge. The records of famous women show us case after case —such as that of George Sand and her son—where the devotion of the grown child has been of a kind not possible unless the mother had inspired it by a mental and spiritual development far beyond the ordinary.

Feminists, then, are inclined to believe that the broad development of women is of more ultimate value to their children than a too close absorption in the nursery is of immediate benefit to them. Children need a variety of care, physical, mental, and spiritual, during each stage of their growth. No woman can qualify to give them all that they need. She must

summon the specialist to her aid in this as in other departments of labour. The mother of the future, educated, responsible, and unburdened, will choose her field of maternal responsibility with open eyes, and will follow it undeterred by the prejudices of the unknowing.

Only those who have closely watched the life of modern children can know how the almost complete absence of the father impairs their development. A child must learn to understand human life. How can he do so, when only one half of life—the woman's—is daily shown him? How can he develop in all-round human qualities when he is surrounded only by women? I have referred before to the urgent need of the reëntrance of the father into the life of the household. Many feminists look forward to the time when a wiser adjustment of labour between the sexes and the classes will make such a reëntrance possible. They believe it is better for the child to enjoy the companionship of both parents part of the day than of one parent all the day. They believe, too, that life will be happier and more normal for men when they have so rearranged the scale of their labours and obligations as to have some opportunity for real companionship with the children whom they have begotten.

Respect for children is a recent innovation. Authority has loosened its hold upon men, is loosening it upon women, and is beginning to slacken its grip

upon the child. Discipline and obedience are of course a necessary part of all training. But the demand for a blind acquiescence in the will of an omnipotent superior is just as stultifying to the child as it was to the wife when exacted by her husband, or to the man when exacted by employer, king or priest. Now that the ideals of freedom of individual thought and action have percolated through noble, middle, and working classes, through the barriers of sex and of age, until they have reached that last vassal, the little child, we are emerging into an age when our family trilogy will be bound together not so much by necessity as by comradely love, and not so much by exactions as by consent and understanding. Men cannot learn to respect childhood until they fully respect the women who are its closest guardians. They can never fully respect women till they are in all things worthy of respect, and this women will never be until they have won to the full freedom, dignity and responsibility which Feminism demands.

The extraordinarily complicated transition stage in which women find themselves to-day must react upon the position of the child in our midst. Side by side with all the enlightened care to which I referred earlier in this chapter, we still find the superstitions, vanities, and injustices of the old haphazard methods of child-care persisted in. Mothers still dress their little girls like dolls, fathers still strike their sons

in hot blood, children are still indulgently smiled at one day for a trick that brings punishment from an overwrought parent the next. Ignorance is still allowed to offer up infant lives on the altar of the sacred "mother's instinct." The child has not yet come into his own. In the most enlightened classes the desire to give him every advantage tends to overburden him with instruction, while he has too little opportunity to invent and discover for himself. The college-bred mother flies from her old faith in instinct to an extreme belief in science, and the baby that used to play in the mud now has his toys sterilized. The mean between the old method and the new has not yet been found, but there can be no question of the earnestness with which young parents are striving to discover it, or of their ultimate success.

Feminists will never be content with the progress of women until they have equally assured the welfare of children. While there lives, or dies, one rickety baby, one sickly, ill-nurtured, or diseased child, the task of the world's conscious womanhood is not completed. While one child is born unwanted, and cared for grudgingly, they have not lifted their sex to its ultimate height. Where women are ignorant and weak the rapture of a free and consciously chosen maternity is denied them, and until each child is born in such joy the race will not have arrived at any full measure of civilization. Marriage must be entered

into by the free choice of both partners unhampered by ill-health or inadequate resources. Maternity must be voluntary, and the best conditions must surround it. Then will the child be brought forth in health and nurtured in pride and joy. Men and women must give of their best to him, the doors of knowledge must be made to open easily and sweetly for him. He must know his parents, but he must also know other men and women. He must know his home, but also the broader world of park, playground and school. He must be a little citizen of the world, not a prisoner of the nursery. He must be neither coddled nor neglected, and must be given the love that teaches him to love humanity, not the adoration that only shows him how to love himself. Some day men and women, striving together, will have gained these things for all children, but by that time the controversy that clamours to-day over the freedom and power of women will be as distant as a burnt-out star.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CENTURY OF SERVICE

THE woman's age is the child's age, and it is also the age of service. Since the beginning women have served their men and their children, through love, but also perforce. Their love and service have been intense, but individual, and the gift of both has been exacted by the dominant sex even from the unwilling. Now that women begin to be free they begin to grow, and those qualities of love and service which lie so deep in their natures are growing too, expanding to embrace not only their own families but all humanity. The spirits of women have been so narrowed and restricted in the past that it has been difficult for them to see love's wider vision. Even the spirit of God has been imprisoned for them in the words of a book, or under the rafters of a building, rather than in the myriad-fold soul of mankind. Or, if they might find it incarnated, it was in the form of one man only, him who was their sovereign. "He for God only, she for God in him," said one of the greatest yet narrowest of poets, uttering simultaneously an unconscious blasphemy against woman, against love, and against

God. A woman might far better love God in her child—the symbol of life—than in her mate. But Milton, together with all early Puritans, saw man not as woman's mate but as her master, lord over her as God was over him. No slave can love as can a free man, and no woman whose devotion was lavished on a master could give the quality of love possible to the free women of to-day.

Together with their strong bodies and trained minds, women are beginning to develop strong and trained hearts. In the past, distress won from women only pity, or a blind charity. The circumstances of their lives and training made it difficult for them either to think or feel broadly, so that there was some truth in the dictum that they were too personal to be just. But the modern woman can supplement her feelings with human knowledge, and her knowledge with womanly pity. Beyond the bounds of family life with its intimate tasks she sees other work for her brain and heart. She begins to know that the mother quality in her can find expression in every department of life, and that all the world needs it. Her hands reach out toward every field of human service where that quality may find play. She has learnt to be a mother and a worker in her home; she begins to realize what new heights of achievement may be hers when she shall become also a worker and a mother in the world without.

There will naturally always be a large number of women in whom the conserving, building quality of the mother is absent, or rudimentary. Not every woman is born to be a mother, either physically or socially. Neither is every man born to create. Yet, speaking very broadly, I think the special genius of men is for creation and discovery, while that of women is for ordering and guarding. Not that this distinction expresses the views of feminists as a body. I have already shown the existence of two distinct schools of thought as to the differentiation in genius between the sexes. They hinge upon the importance which is attached to sex itself, whether the division of humanity into men and women is regarded as merely physical, or also as deeply spiritual. My own view lies about midway between the contestants. I think sex differences have been enormously and most unfortunately exaggerated in the past, to the great detriment of human development. Yet that there are certain deep temperamental and spiritual distinctions between the mass of men and women seems clear to me, though in some individuals the differences in quality are negligible, while in others they are patently extreme. The difficulty in judging these qualities lies in our age-long habit of arbitrarily deciding which characteristics are male and which female, regardless of the absence of any adequate scientific data upon the subject. We have no evidence, for

example, that such traits as courage, logic, or vanity are more inherent in one sex than in the other, though we all know that the first two have been demanded of men rather than of women, and the last condoned in women more than in men.

But in the future feminists believe that the differences and likenesses in the two sexes will be clearly demonstrated and understood, with the consequent avoidance of much wasted effort, misunderstanding and injustice. When all doors are open to women, and they are able fearlessly to be themselves, I believe that the qualities of conservation and careful building, of which I have spoken as belonging to motherhood, will be found to have a social value far too great to permit of further atrophy and disuse. My own theory is that a very large part of the sedentary administrative and executive work of government offices and business enterprises, which now devolves upon men, will be performed by women, and that great numbers of men will thereby be left free for the more creative or physically energetic branches of work, to which they are temperamentally and bodily most suited.

Certain it is that the greatest successes hitherto achieved by women in the work of the world have been along these ordered lines. From reigning queens down through every variety of social worker, organizer, or teacher, the most notable successes of women

have been in ruling, ordering, and conserving, rather than in inventing, competing, or exploring.

Male qualities have had full play. Paternalism has held sway in a hundred lands. As I write, dominant masculinity seems bent on bringing to wanton ruin the fair edifice of civilization it has created. The greatest epoch of the world's material advancement is ending in one colossal cataclysm of blood and devastation. Does it mean nothing that the position of women is singularly low in the country which is the prime mover in this convulsion?—or, conversely, that the countries where women have been given most honour and freedom are those most completely detached from it? A knightly spirit of obligation toward the parent country is sending troops from Australasia as from other British colonies; but neither there, nor in Seandinavia, nor throughout the United States, is to be found the faintest evidence of any desire among the people for wars of conquest or aggression. This civilized spirit is responsible for the elevated position of women which, in its turn, reacts to the further civilization of the community. Looking on the spectacle of Europe engulfed in barbarism, these more fortunate nations may well realize that for the true building of a world-state the hands of women are needed as much as those of men.

We have called this the century of service, yet in a moment of time its opening has been turned into an

age of blood. As in Greece before the Peloponnesian war, never were the aspirations of enlightened humanity higher, and never have they been more rudely disappointed. So far history seems to continue its wearisome reiteration; but the parallel ends there. When the Greeks forgot their visions there were no other peoples to remember them. But to-day, whatever befall Europe, the world's strong young democracies can keep their eyes fixed on the light beyond and need be forced backward into no anachronistic slough of despond. These young lands are free to keep alive the new spirit of community service, which we have been proud to believe was the distinguishing mark of our age. Untrammelled by autocracy, they can and will continue to develop the arts of peaceful growth in which the genius of women can most readily find play.

The world needs its women. For nearly two thousand years western civilization has utterly failed to practise the injunctions of its greatest Teacher. All the brilliant discoveries, all the conquest, all the genius of men, have not sufficed to make the world a happy or safe place for simple folk to live in. While women, who have by nature the conserving instinct, have been held to a strictly individualistic life, men, whose instinct is for conquest, have failed to perform the conserving work of the world. It is time that men and women together bent their efforts to building

up life, instead of wealth. It is time that our sense of values changed, so that a child may become more important than a machine, and a garden more necessary than a skyscraper. It is time that the world's greatest regard should be given to him who serves best, not to him who most successfully competes.

I do not pretend that the infusion of women into the world's affairs will instantly have this result. There are plenty of selfish and light women, many who are grasping and greedy; there are no virtues in women superior to those found in men. But the genius of man is heated, energetic, and dynamic; he is impatient of results and of antagonists. It will be many a long age before he rids himself of the fighting instinct bred in him from the savage dawn of life, and which he shows to-day as much in his great business enterprises as in his armaments. This instinct has been of inestimable benefit to the race, in spite of its terrible fruits of blood and grief; but the day of its domination is past. We need now the quieter qualities of nurturing care which the instincts of women can best supply. It is not too much to hope that the free woman of the future, divorced from those attributes of the slave and the plaything induced in her by her long subjection, may grow in the nobler qualities of love and service which are the chief need of humanity. If most women had not, deep in their natures, these capacities, then their million years of

motherhood would indeed have been fruitless. The need for the mother-principle in the world is greater to-day than it has ever been, and for the first time women in large numbers are conscious of the need, and strong enough to supply it.

In the midst of an infinity of false standards induced by the luxuries of a too suddenly wealthy age, the task of the leaders among women is constantly to lay before them the enormous responsibilities which their educated freedom entails. In the midst of much superficiality of feeling, induced by our artificial standards of life, the leaders' duty is to call upon the deep and hidden hearts of women; to raise the common soul of their sex to a higher plane of love and service.

Feminists, whose work lies among the thoughtful and public-spirited of their sex, must not forget that side by side with the fine and ennobling development of women which their cause has nurtured, march the dangers never absent from freedom. To understand this clearly, we must remember that throughout the past women could never be held entirely to account for either their successes or their failures, either their virtues or their vices. Women have been the product of their environment in a more special sense than men, for they have rarely enjoyed a free choice in their lines of development. For instance, chastity has been imposed on women, and piety expected of

them, to such an extent that the practice of these qualities has become an unquestioned habit with large masses of women. On the other hand, loyalty to each other, honesty about business matters, and strict truthfulness, have never been especially demanded of women, so that in cultivating these virtues they have often actually stepped aside from the traditions of their sex.

Now-a-days, however, they are largely free to choose their qualities. Economic independence, the lack of religious and parental control, and a knowledge of life unattainable even by men until the age of science, make it possible for modern women to discover their real natures untrammelled by traditional moulds. We see that the dangers of this freedom lie in the chance that women, faring forth on their voyage of self-discovery, may at first fail to recognize what is fundamental in their natures, as apart from what is ephemeral or fortuitous. Freed for ever from the confines of their arbitrarily marked channels, these craft need at least a compass, and some among them may fail to find an accurate one. This difficulty is one which must be faced by every individual passing from sheltered adolescence to maturity; by every nation emerging from the monarchical into the democratic form of government; and by women to-day. The fact that freedom may be abused has been used by every despot as his excuse for withholding it

from his subjects. It has been used by husbands who have kept wives in subjection, and is used daily by those reactionaries who seek to stay the feminist advance. Undoubtedly the freedom and responsibility so suddenly attained by women leaves some among them at a loss. Unquestionably some women have sought to imitate the bad and good attributes of men rather than to discover their own. Where this is so, it is the leaders' task to point the truer way. In our great cities, coexistent with the woman who is using her freedom to serve humanity, is she who uses it to prey upon and waste the social fabric. Such is the spendthrift, the idler or the parasite, who uses the advantages democracy has given her to try to set up in its midst a sorry imitation of the vices of an aristocracy. Such is the business woman who, ambitious of success, uses the male methods of ruthless competition and commercial greed to gain her ends. These types of conduct are neither inherently womanly nor inherently human. The parasite is merely a survival from the slave-status of woman, the aggressor from the brute stage in man. My personal antipathy to militancy, for example, is not that it breaks the man-made law, but that it uses a male weapon which is already an anachronism. Men have not yet learnt to dispense with aggression in any department of life, but women need never learn to use it. There is only one law under which women can

live to be worthy of themselves, and that is the law of love. The mounting spiral of their spiritual growth should lead them through mate-love to mother-love, and through that to an ever-heightened love of humanity. We may hope that the free woman of the future will develop great gifts as artist and creator, but that she will turn them ever into the channel of loving service. Men have created mainly for the sake of creation, and their work is good. Women will create, we hope, for the sake of serving, so that each fragment of their work will fit, like part of a puzzle, into the great scheme of human growth. For a time the emancipated woman has laboured mainly to express herself, for her need of such expression was great. This task accomplished, and her range found, she will, with growing single-mindedness, face her task, which is to be the race's builder. Let her not imagine she can perform this mission by narrow concentration upon the love of her own little brood. Her physical maternity occupies but a portion of her life; all her later years must be given to labours that shall embrace the needs of an ever-widening group, until the interplay of the unfettered hearts and minds of women upon the human family shall gather all its parts under the shadow of the wings of love.

Before Zeus and the gods of Olympus was Gaia, the earth-mother, the giver of life. Strong with the strength of all fruitfulness was she, enduring and

watchful, but hidden. Life's beginnings were with her, and so must its maturity be also. The mother-principle in humanity must grow to a strength that shall hearten also the father-instinct, and carry the world's children with it to happiness. Its love must emerge from inner consciousness of depth to outward manifestations of power, and it must never pause, and never be content, until all men have turned from rivalry to comradeship, and all women from childishness to strength.

CHAPTER XXII

THE FUTURE VISION

THOSE who love humanity, and believe in that miraculous power of growth which we call evolution, find all the checks with which the unimaginative seek to cumber the progress of the race singularly childish. They see democracy, or the freeing of the people, and Feminism, or the freeing of women, as inevitable steps in the long march of humanity from the blindness of the brute to the clear-eyed knowledge of the future. They see freedom of choice as the prime requisite of development, and comradeship as the necessary basis of happiness. They see the stultifying atmosphere of individualism in which the world's women have hitherto lived as a grave check to the race, and they see the narrow, monotonous lives of the majority of the world's workers of either sex in the same light.

Those who believe in the ever-expanding mission of women do not imagine that the happier future of humanity will be won through the efforts of one sex alone. As through the coordination of the physical functions of the sexes new life is created, so, they

believe, through their mental cooperation new knowledge will flow into mankind, and so through the union of the spiritual forces of men and women will the soul of humanity also grow. When the instinct of mastery shall at last die out of love it will change from a tempest to a flower. As the soul of man learns to know love truly it will be purged of jealousy, and we shall at last love our brothers without envy and our mates without fear. We stand at the beginning of the end of the rule of force, and on the threshold of the rule of intelligence. Beyond these lies the rule of the spirit, to which only a few souls in all mankind have held the key. The part of women in evolution is to try and hasten humanity beyond the rule of force, through the rule of intelligence to the distant day when the spiritual values of life shall at last attain prime importance. Men have hitherto been the priests of intellect and women the priestesses of love. Each must learn much from the other, for the spirit cannot emerge triumphant until all knowledge has been attained, and of knowledge love is the ultimate goal.

Had I the power of pen or voice, and dared take upon myself the task of invocation, I would urge those who are working to-day in the cause of humanity's dispossessed—whether for the toilers or for women—to lay aside now and for ever all weapons of hatred and bitterness, and cleave only to the panoply

of love. The earth's oppressors are many. The crudest barbarism of force has risen, million-sworded, to thrust Europe under a despotic heel. Owners of the earth's riches seek on all sides to hold the toilers to the status of serfs. Men still cage the spirits of women and use their bodies for sport. Even women are not guiltless of an arrogant attempt to circumscribe the activities of other women in the name of class or race.

Against all such acts noble minds rise in revolt in every nation and in every class. But how much more beautiful would be the ultimate triumph of good if it could be won without hate. For, after all, who are those whom we condemn? Whether in palace, counting-house or drawing-room, who are the oppressors of humanity but humanity's most truly dispossessed? Is there a sweated worker in any tenement of America so utterly outcast from the human family as is Europe's war-lord? Is there any broken creature of the streets whose soul is so empty of growth as is his who uses her for his appetites? Is there a pariah of society further beyond the pale than the wealthy employer who grinds his work-people? These indeed are earth's disinherited, and for these we should reserve our deepest pity. When we cry against them with the thunder of oratory or the shriek of head-lines we are only condemning the poor failures of evolution. It is as if we raged against a

hunchback, or one whose eyes were set squintingly. I have been in great meeting-places where the leaders of nations speak, and have heard Democracy's full-throated roar of hate against her oppressors. Cries of rage have mounted against this or that betrayal, against this or that autocrat. And I have thought that not one man of those who shouted was so in need of pity as the misguided and ignorant ones against whom his hate was spent.

For thousands of years we have met hate with hate, oppression with counter-oppression, struggle with struggle, and what has it availed us? After all our efforts we have a world to-day armed to the eyes, nation against nation, class against class, even, alas, sex against sex. We have the dreadnought against the submarine, the lock-out against the strike, the armed miner against the armed guard. For ten thousand years we have punished wrong by hatred, and wrong still flourishes. Nineteen hundred years ago we were conjured to lay aside hate and find love, and we have not yet done so. Nineteen hundred years ago we were told not to stone the sinner unless our own hearts were clean; but we still cast the stone. It is time we learnt our lesson. It is true that the oppressors must be eliminated, and that speedily. If a mad dog menaces us we kill it, but we do not hate it. We pity it rather for being mad, and question ourselves if we are not to blame for the conditions

that permitted its disease. Thus we remove a danger without doing hurt to ourselves. In such a spirit, dispassionate, pitiful, but firm, I think the world's women would desire humanity to deal with the poor stragglers who so retard its march. If, for instance, they could be consulted in this sad autumn of nineteen hundred and fourteen, I think they would exclaim that the wars which so humiliate civilization must cease now and for ever. They would, I believe, call upon every nation of the world to join together and intervene to check the blood-lustful in the name of the human race. I think women, if they had the power, would demand that those in whom the conqueror's madness rises to threaten humanity should be removed by the act of all the world's peoples to some spot from which they could menace the world no more. That being done, women would ask that the nations take upon themselves the task of reconstruction. They would ask them to disarm the aggressors, and disarm themselves, leaving only one great international force to be responsible for the world's peace. They would ask that this force should act under the orders of some supreme court of the nations, and that it should halt all aggressors with the same dispassionate thoroughness with which a policeman breaks up a street fight among small boys.

For women are tired of war. They are tired of hatred, rivalry and blood-guiltiness. They know

only one legitimate act of violence—the act of defence: they know only one permissible hatred—the hatred of hate itself. All the wrongs of the world seem to women to have been brought about rather in the spirit of little boys fighting over a toy, the ownership of which they all desire and the use of which none of them understands. Deep, deep down in women, below their admiration and love of men, below the joy they take in leaning on their strength and in following their genius, lies the unspoken belief that they are, after all, only children. To women it seems that men play with life. Whether in warfare, business, invention or in love, it is to the game of living they seem thrall, rather than to life itself. This is not true of all men. There are scientists, thinkers and priests who serve life in a spirit of kinship which women can comprehend. But from the greater part of men's acts the deep soul of women stands aloof with a puzzled tolerance, as a mother watches the ingenious make-believe of her little son.

This soul of women, so long inarticulate, begins now to stir like the sleeping form of the enchanted princess in the old tale. As she opened her eyes at the call of love, so the woman-spirit, conscious at last, awakens to the urge of a love mightier than any hero's, the love of the life-force for humanity. Whatever the name we give this force—whether we call it Nature, Law, or God, we may believe it is urging

women to take upon themselves a greater share of its service. We may believe that when women band themselves together as they are doing to-day to achieve the power that comes from union, they are but obeying the call of the same force which the mother serves when she gives her breast to her child. They are following the law of life, which has taught them from the beginning that the strength of love lies in a heightened power to serve. However blindly, weakly, or narrowly, women have always given this service to the world. To-day, working in a thousand fields of cooperative activity, they are striving to learn to give it broadly, with knowledge, and with strength. Whatever may be their future in the individualistic fields of self-expression, their future in communal work is sure; it is that of the service of love. In this one quality they surpass men; but whereas men have hitherto used their talents to the full, women have too often buried theirs in the earth. Those who lead the great awakening of the soul of women which we inadequately call the feminist movement, know that their sex stands only upon the threshold of its ultimate powers, the full development of which is so bitterly needed by humanity. If the world, now so full of wrong, is to learn the way of love and peace, it can do so through no weak prayerful efforts of puny women, but only through all the fearlessly exerted strength of which their sex is capable. Nor can wo-

men shuffle off their responsibilities to the race by a few years given to the joys of individual motherhood. We have had a million years of animal and human motherhood; what we now need is social motherhood. We need a race whose women are strong, free, enlightened and organized. They must be strong to bear and to work, free to choose their love and their labour, wise enough to make right use of both, and so united into one human family that wrong offered one is offered all. Above all, women must keep to the law of love. From this there can be no breaking away. The greatest need of humanity—the need of the Dear Love of Comrades—can be attained through the help of women, be their vision but true enough.

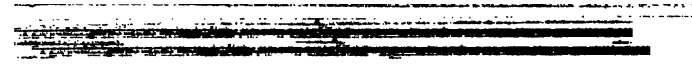
* * *

In the dark doorway of her cottage a mother stood silent, watching her sons who played without in a fair open space. They played eagerly, feverishly, and as the mother stood aloof they struggled fiercely together, trampling the young grass and flowers until the fair place took on the semblance of a battlefield where dead things lie. At last the mother spoke, and said: "My sons, you should have tended these green things. Instead you have struggled together bitterly, until you have blackened the place which should be beautiful. Now I command you, take each

the other's hand, bind up each other's hurts, and tend our garden." This mother was strong and wise, so that when she spoke her sons hearkened, and did as she commanded. Also, she came into the garden and worked with them, leaving her dark doorway for the sun.

Even so, forsaking their mute watch, may women persuade the human family to peace and to sweet brotherly labours. Even so in the years to come may they help to make the world a garden. But for this they must possess strength, knowledge, and love, and with no lesser tools shall they ever remain satisfied.

THE END



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